

*The*  
Development and Philosophy  
*of*  
Australian Aestheticism

*by*

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### *DEDICATION.*

*To all lovers of the ideal, to all upholders of the aesthetic in literature, art, music, architecture, etc., to all seekers of those flowers that bloom beautifully in the garden of life, to all real lovers of Australia, keen to see their country leading in the spiritual sense, as well as in other ways, this book is humbly dedicated.*



MELBOURNE,

SEPTEMBER, 1949.

## PREFACE.

*In 1941, I published "The Philosophy of Australian Education." In 1944, "The History, Development, and Underlying Ideal of Australian Culture" was prepared for the printer, and while securing the material for that book, "The Development and Philosophy of Australian Aestheticism," seemed to me to be a production that would serve as a fitting complement to the others, and be a study of interest to Australians generally, and to scholars in particular.*

*In dealing with such a subject the author is aware of its difficulty, since he enters a field of research illimitable in extent, and far-reaching in effect, and consequently, he presents his work with some feelings of diffidence. If he has rushed in, where wise men have not ventured, his justification is that while not presenting his work as a philosopher, he writes as one interested in literature and art, in aesthetics and culture. A personal keenness that the world should know his country better, and a strong feeling of patriotism has also urged him to set forth the aesthetic features of his Commonwealth, and to examine the ideals that were responsible for its aesthetic.*

*Some writers might insist that Australia is not old enough, from an historical point of view, nor sufficiently matured spiritually to warrant an investigation into its culture and its aesthetic achievements, or to have its aesthetic set forth and analysed, yet a beginning must be made sometime, and if this work appears not to be as comprehensive as it might be, still suggestions for others, from this ground-work of the matter, and the general outline of an interesting and all-embracing study, may be instrumental in calling forth scholars, who will write more authoritatively, and submit their researches with more grace and charm.*

*The study of culture opens up a wide field of continental research and interest; the study of aesthetics deals with a world far wider, with problems more significant, with art epochs more diverse, and with psychological situations quite as complicated as in the culture groups. In this work the aesthetic expression of literature has been stressed more emphatically than the artistic phase, the historical element more than the cultural, the philosophic outlook more than the practical. I have confined myself to phases of thought which bear on aesthetic theories, and I have accepted only those in the historical record of Australian activities that refer directly, or indicate clearly the development of its aesthetic.*

*By not placing too much emphasis on the art section of my book, there is little danger of giving to what is written a polemic colour, a thing by no means desired; and if the literary side is stressed, it is solely due to the fact that the writer's interest*

*in the aesthetic side of literature has never been sporadic, nor incidental, but persistent, selective, and critical. Furthermore, the signs of the times are favourable to general culture; many books are being published, libraries are arising everywhere, and every library is a university in posse. Publishers at present are helping to make the world's literature accessible to all; literary masterpieces are being translated from one language into another, and many of the translations are, in themselves, literature.*

*While I am deeply indebted to writers dealing generally with aesthetics and aestheticism, in the Australian field I am severely alone—solus cum solo. No author has so far touched more than the fringe of culture; no writer, as far as can be ascertained, has ever ventured into the precincts of Australian aestheticism.*

*Works on Australian art, painting, sculpture, architecture, music, etc., are by no means numerous, and those that have appeared are not in many cases authoritative. Books dealing with literature are more plentiful, but the works of reference required for the material of this work were not easy to secure. The Mitchell Library, where two months were spent in interesting research, the Melbourne Public Library, and the valuable library of the Melbourne Historical Society, proved to be of great value and service in obtaining the necessary material, while the guidance of many people, not all of whom were conscious of the fact, facilitated the writer's efforts to do in the field of aesthetics what scholars accomplished in relation to other subjects.*

*It must not be thought that in the parts dealing with literature, art, architecture, etc., that the whole province of such subjects has been dealt with—each part represents a thesis in itself. I have only tried to indicate the growth of the aesthetic element in each section and I have only utilized as much material as appeared necessary or of moment.*

*The writer's aim has been to clothe the research in an acceptable literary form, rather than to present a work smothered with blankets of footnotes, multiple quotations and endless bibliographies—a mere academic and mechanical exercise. Aestheticism is the subject, aesthetic appreciation, a spiritual experience is the goal sought for in the production of this book.*

*A deep debt of gratitude is due to the assistants in the various libraries who have helped to find the references, and to the friends who facilitated the routine work, so that the time could be spent happily in gathering the facts, and putting together the various materials for this thesis during the four full years that were necessary for its completion.*

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## PART ONE.

### THE DEVELOPMENT AND PHILOSOPHY OF AUSTRALIAN AESTHETICISM.

#### Introduction.

The thesis sets out to establish three things: First, that an expression of the aesthetic has taken place in Australia; secondly, that the Australian aesthetic has undergone a development; and thirdly, that the development has a philosophy, i.e., underlying the development there is a philosophic implication.

It will be shown that almost from the political foundation of Australia, there has existed and still exists an appreciation of the aesthetic, and a development of that feature in its people. The expression of the aesthetic is found in the literature, the art, the music, the architecture, the way of life, the love for the beautiful in the homes, gardens, towns, cities, country centres, the social and moral ideals of the people, their keenness for culture, and the standard of personal efficiency sought for by its people.

There are places in the chief cities of the Australian Commonwealth where a particular expression of the aesthetic is noticeable, such as the picture galleries, the libraries, the museums, the churches, the public buildings, etc., and such places in Australia have a special interest for students, scholars, critics, for the old residents in the locality as well as for the casual visitors. In some places archives are kept; in other centres treasures of the past are stored; in odd places relics of former days—statues, memorials, objects of interest associated with the great leaders of early Australia are displayed, and they in a measure indicate the aesthetic mood of the period when they were erected.

That the aesthetic in Australia has undergone a development represents the second contention of the thesis. The development can be realised from a study of Australian history, from an analysis of its political and social framework, from an examination of its literary and artistic efforts, from the crude culture of its early colonial period to the time, when a commercial aristocracy made its presence felt, from the trend of the movements—sociological, spiritual, and religious, that have characterised Australian life and history; from the responses—academic, critical, scientific and spiritual made by her scholars; from the cultural advances that Australia has made since Federation, and from the multiple elements that influence it daily in the social, economic, literary, philosophic and even mystical life of the community.

The book with its seventeen chapters endeavours to cover the whole matter of Australian aestheticism, and each chapter aims at contributing such features as will make the whole study intelligible, consistent, and of educational value to readers. It illustrates how the expression of the aesthetic differs in people with advancing age, wider experiences, deeper knowledge and careful direction and education. Ideals, the way of perfection, the charm of poetry, the interchange of ideas on art, the toilsome journey via *aesthetica*, etc., represent necessary aids in the finer development of a people's imaginative culture, leading them to exercise forethought in town-planning, wisdom in the preservation of beauty spots and prudence in the art of life.

Australians during the past one hundred years have grown up in happy circumstances and pleasant surroundings, due to the foresight of their men of vision, and, as a result, they will be participators in the golden age of the future. Their attainments and achievements will make people of other nations keen to migrate to Australia to share in the good fortune and enjoy the social, cultural and aesthetic supremacy that is the particular property of the Australian.

The third part of the thesis represents the philosophy underlying the development of the Australian aesthetic, and deals with the philosophy of art and literature in detail. The introduction to the section begins with a reference to aesthetic philosophy in general, and with its implications. The third part concludes with possibilities for the future, and what may be expected from the Land of the South, as a result of its aesthetic claims.

The last chapter of the book contrasts the past position of Australia with what statesmen, practical men, and idealists, her literati and her artists have been responsible for, when they secured for the Commonwealth in the aesthetic sphere, what has made her present position so different from what it was fifty or sixty years ago.

The first chapter supplies an explanation of what is understood by the word aesthetic—its moods, trends, sense, its methods of procedure, its laws, its relation to art, its judgment, the aesthetic pleasure and the advantage of an understanding of its principles. The chapter concludes with an account of some of the aesthetic philosophers, and the different philosophic theories they maintained. The second chapter deals with the background of Australia and indicates the sort of country on which the aesthetic finds a field for its practice. The third chapter indicates the dawn of the Australian aesthetic and its subsequent history, the fourth and fifth

chapters present a cursory treatment of the contributory factors—the political, economic, sociological, psychological, philosophic and individual—factors of the background that facilitated or helped the development of the Australian's aesthetic, enabling him to develop an aesthetic sense, to appreciate aesthetic forms, and to evaluate aesthetic experiences. The sixth and succeeding chapters represent the aesthetic field—literature, art, music, architecture, adult education and personal efficiency, etc.—all these are the great spheres of man's spiritual activity. To these groups has been added a section (1) on mysticism, for rightly understood, the mystical theory offers people a better and more rational aesthetic than any other aesthetic emotion.

Chapters 11, 12 and 13 present a criticism of the Australian aesthetic. In chapters 14 and 15 the philosophy underlying the Australian aestheticism is developed—the philosophy of aesthetics, the philosophy of art and the philosophy of literature.

The final chapters of the work deal with the future of the Australian aesthetic and the conclusion of the thesis. The author, in his concluding remarks, expresses the hope that the knowledge of the Australian aesthetic will interest all readers, not only in matters of a purely aesthetic nature, but will inspire world leaders and creators to make the Australian exterior world the scene of their triumphs.

The chapter dealing with the philosophy underlying the aesthetic, opens up big problems and presents to students and readers the various theories that have held sway from time to time. One theory after enjoying the popular favour for a time, has found itself replaced by another. Philosophers and aestheticians have upheld theories and drawn up aesthetic rules, but new approaches to the subject and the advance of science, have modified, or even wholly changed the theories formerly upheld (2) "There is a lack of agreement among writers while books on aesthetics are far from being satisfactory." This chapter has two important sections added to it—the Philosophy of Australian Literature and the Philosophy of Australian Art.

The relation between aesthetics and art, between the idea of art and artistic intuition is art criticism. So far no Australian history of art criticism has as yet appeared. The (3) essential condition of the artistic judgment is to have a universal idea of art, and at the same time, to recognise it in the personality of the artist to be judged. In other words the

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(1) The Problem of Art. (P. Green).

(2) The Problem of Art. (P. Green).

(3) History of Art Criticism. (Lionello Venturi).

artistic judgment must consider the personality of the artist as an expression of universal art.

Aestheticians regard beauty as the sole aim of art, but they use beauty in a wide sense, and include every possible species of aesthetic impression; they make use of many words in their category, e.g., the sublime, the romantic, the graceful, the grand, the realistic, etc., to describe particular shades of aesthetic feelings; but though the words have their use, they are of no philosophic value—the boundary line between them is not clear, and therefore it is difficult to use them for purposes of definition. There are as many modifications of the beautiful as there are of intellectual concepts. The Oriental and European sense of beauty differ widely, since the general culture of the Oriental differs considerably from those people in the western world.

It is possible that there are other soils and climates in the world where the aesthetic flower blooms more readily, flourishes more richly, and develops more beautifully than in Australia. Other countries, by reason of a wider historical background, a longer social and political existence, and the seeds of a saner culture being scattered more profusely in its soil may have had more vital literary and aesthetic movements, but no country has made the same headway in so short a time, either politically, economically or educationally, in its social experiments, or in its aesthetic endeavour, as Australia. Russia had no regular theory of aesthetics of its own before 1830. Up to that date, Russia followed the example of foreign literary styles, especially French ones, but did not discuss the principles of art. In 1826, German philosophy found its way in to the Russian Universities and gave rise to new aesthetic ideals, but Schelling's system found most favour. Danish (1) aesthetic seems to have made a beginning in 1844, for in that year C. E. T. Wilkins set up for Denmark a philosophic system of aesthetic. In 1888 he gave to Danish literature a handbook of aesthetics.

While this thesis sets out to establish the three things indicated in the beginning of the Introduction, it is not possible to decide on a particular date, for the development of its aesthetic. The years 1880 and 1890 have a definite claim, while the year of Federation, 1900, has every right to be considered, as it represents a stage for the dawn of a new era in Australian life. Canada and United States are faced with the same difficulty of fixing on an exact date for saying that it possessed an aesthetic theory of its own.

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(1) "The Hierarchy of Art and Studies New and Old." (Page 289).



Some critics would argue that Australia, as yet, has no aesthetic, and relies mainly on English models, but the growth of Australian nationalism, the rise of great poets, writers, and artists, have helped to place her people in harmony with their environment, and have developed so luminous a cultural expression as to justify the Australian's claim for his own aesthetic.

One difference between Australian and other other literatures and art development is that while other countries, by reason of centuries of work and practice, have reached the summit of their greatness, Australian literature and art have barely recorded a century of development, and they are still moving on towards maturity and a loftier expression of the beautiful in life and art; they are still keen to discover work that will endure, names that will be enshrined on the role of fame, ever-living presences that will be enthroned in the literary and artistic courts of the world.

The beauty of the Australian scenery, the glory of the clear sunshine, the witchery of bird-song — the spirit that animates the people, the freedom they enjoy—are things that have impressed themselves on the minds of the poets of the day, and a new note in Australian literature is steadily increasing in volume, the consciousness of a national life is dawning, or has dawned, and is finding an expression. The seeing eye of the poet is turned to the nations of the world, and the insistent inspirational call to people to fit themselves to rank with them rings through the land. "No wonder that the grove of the muses in Australia is full of singing birds, all ringing with sweet pure notes on every side. No doubt some of the notes are echoes—imitative echoes of the strains of mightier singers, but other notes show the affluence of fancy, the lordship over language, wealth of material, facility of utterance, and joyousness of song. Other notes again, are resonant with melody, rich with romance, thrilling with high wrought passion, and rapt with noble vision."

In poetry, which is pre-eminently a matter of taste, each reader finds his own affinities and knows what best appeals to him—one likes the ballad, and another the lyric, and a third blank verse, a fourth free verse and so on.

The poet says:—

"'Tis with our judgments as our watches,  
None go just alike, yet each believes his own."

The books, the poems, the painted pictures, the sculptured images the speculations in philosophy, the various aesthetic theories put forward, etc., by the different authorities are all things that concern man, things which God himself, by using

man as His instrument, brings into the world. Operatio sequitur esse—the kind of work follows from the kind of workman, and as the Australians of late years, according to Norman Bartlett (1), have begun to look at themselves with an eye to discover what they are, and how they came to be so, great results can be expected to follow, even though, T. Inglis Moore writes (2):—“In no other country are its finer poets so little known or so narrowly appreciated as in Australia.”

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(2). *Six Australian Poets* (T. Inglis Moore).

(1). *Australian Writers Speak* (Norman Bartlett).

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE AESTHETIC.

#### INTRODUCTION.

Before the matter of the thesis is set out in detail, it is necessary to explain what is meant by the word "aesthetic" and for what it stands. A. G. Baumgarten (1714-1762), an immediate predecessor of Kant, devised the word aesthetics (based on the Greek word *Aisthetica* meaning pertaining to sense perception) to describe the realm of obscure percept. Due to Kant's influence the word aesthetics is now commonly used in all languages to refer to the world of beauty. The term means the study of such matters as art and the beautiful, and although theorising about art is as old as Plato, yet aesthetics, which is practically the same thing, is said to date from 1750.

Writers today employ the word aesthetics to mean something of a sublime and excellent order relative to the form of a work, the manner of its execution and the underlying principle behind the external production; it basically (1) denotes one of the ultimate values—the ideal of beauty, a quality for which the spirit of man has a natural desire implanted in him.

It was in the field of art that the word aestheticism figured first, but now we speak of an aesthetic in literature, in music, in architecture, etc. The terms aesthetic taste, aesthetic experiences, aesthetic expression, aesthetic articulation, etc., are frequently found and widely used, showing that the word is not confined to any one particular subject. In its general use it means the pleasure given to a fully and delicately responsive perception. The finer the spirit of the artist, the finer the issue which touches him and prompts his work. The object of fine art—including the literary art is simply to give aesthetic pleasure, and such pleasure is for the *Aisthetica* and art is fine art only when it gives fine pleasure. The term aesthetic refers also to experience as appreciative, perceptive, and enjoying, more from the standpoint of the "consumer" than of the producer.

Aesthetic (1) study was formerly regarded as a branch of philosophy, but now it has been transferred to the psychological section, since the philosophical conception brought the study to confusion.

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(1) Art and Religion (Page 56). (P. Dearmer).

Art has a long history; it began and developed in the Grecian days (some maintain that it had an earlier origin); it flourished under Roman rule; it made its presence felt during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance; in recent centuries its development was marked, and right up to the present day it has not lost its vigour. The Grecian and Roman eras were known as the classic period; other eras had their distinguishing labels such as the Gothic age, the Romantic period, but in the 18th century the neo-classic ideal was at its zenith and the taste of the neo-classical period conditioned the ideas in modern aesthetics.

Art, according to John Dewey, denotes a process of doing or making: "Every (1) art does something with some physical material, the body or something outside the body, with or without the use of intervening tools, and with a view to the production of something visible, audible, or tangible."

Literature and art, poetry and drama, did not spring into life by the magic waving of a wand. Gifted men in pursuit of grandeur and beauty in the course of ages, invented the arts of music, sculpture, painting, architecture, etc., and with their literature the art of words came into being. The arts are studied separately, but in reality they are always re-acting on one another. The life of art is a continuous process of growth; to frustrate that growth is to extinguish its life. If one is artistic, the proof does not lie in his "liking" pictures and music, but in an overwhelming desire for beauty in every cranny of life. "Art is not a decoration, nor is it concerned solely with the feeling of pleasure, or solemnity, but is primarily the result of the perception and love of the Beautiful."

#### VIA AESTHETICA.

A branch (2) of art in the highest sense involves three distinct factors: (1) The reproduction of the phenomena of nature, especially of its sights and sounds; (2) An expression of the thoughts and emotions of the artist; (3) An embodiment of the features of (1) and (2) in an external product like a painting, a statue, a Cathedral, a piece of ornament, etc. It is not easy to see how these things are philosophically related. Plato and Aristotle considered the matter two thousand years ago, and as yet the problem remains. It could be asked also, if there is a criterion of excellence in the aesthetic? Two hypotheses are put forward as regards aesthetic excellence. The first—a criterion can be established by the critical analysis of accepted models. Secondly—that a criterion can be based

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(1) Art as Experience. (John Dewey).

(2) The Study of Art. (R. H. Wilenski)

on the consensus of experts. As regards the first hypothesis, the attempt to limit aesthetic expression by rules and formulae is futile. e.g., It is not possible to construct a new Hamlet by taking the old one to pieces to observe how it is done. In the second case, it is found that expert knowledge counts for little in aesthetics. The profundities, delicacies and subtleties of a great work of art seem to be discovered only by those, who themselves excel as artists, whether they be poets or painters, architects or sculptors, musicians or mystics. A third hypothesis is also put forward—"A scale of aesthetic values is not possible, because art is allied to other great spiritual interests." As some of the best sonnets have been written by debased minds; as theism and atheism, have both been responsible for inspiriting the creators of artistic beauty, this third hypothesis would also seem to merit little consideration. A fourth (1) and final hypothesis is that Beauty having no objective validity, no scale of values is possible. It is, therefore, a communication from spirit to spirit, and its value being personal and individual is not accessible. Since this problem presents big difficulties the solution of it has yet to come.

In contemplating (1) a work of art the aim is to enter the creator's mind. The artist's skill enables him to extract the spirit of a thing, or event, and embody it more or less successfully in his medium. In the work produced, the beauty to which the artist has given expression is endeavoured to be apprehended. The thing called beauty, physical beauty, is obviously necessary to aesthetic reproduction, but whether it is subjective or objective, whether beauty in itself exists, or whether it is only our thinking that makes it so, is a much debated question. There are times when we see no beauty in things, which at other times move us greatly, and we are then inclined to argue, that beauty must dwell in our spirit. The cultivated portion of mankind is inclined to believe that the beauty resides in the object itself, e.g., a rose, a statue, a gem, etc.

Croce maintains that beauty implies a mind, and that a physical thing cannot in the full sense, possess beauty. Science shows that the mental picture formed by an individual of the external world, is quite inadequate and, therefore, misleading. Beauty, (2) according to Little, is a property of an object rendering its contemplation pleasant, and a beautiful thing is what immediately, or by its sole appearance, pleases the mind. The beautiful is also considered as the impression giving the feeling of completeness in its kind. In the beauti-

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(1) Appreciation of Beauty. (F. W. Westaway).

(2) The Nature of Art (Geo. Little).

ful, the condition is passive, reposeful, self-forgetful, in which the perceiver is lost by becoming identified with that which is perceived.

There is an aesthetic in poetry, in prose, in art, in music, architecture, criticism, in fact in any art. The aesthetic can be intellectual, mystical, historical and even mathematical. It is possible to widen its meaning further, and to maintain that there is an aestheticism in living, in personal efficiency, in education, culture, the ordinary transactions of our daily life, our home, gardens, nay, even in our religion.

Aestheticism, in general, then means an excellence, a qualitative taste, a love for the beautiful, something that is the best possible for men and women in this life; it is in reality the philosophy of art and of the beautiful. Aesthetics demands education, planning ahead, useful citizenship, cultured homes, wise living, good manners as practised by the people, a happy and hopeful outlook for all. It also exacts good moral health for its citizens, a full rich life for those who place the spiritual life before the material, the imponderable before those things that savour of the temporal conception of life. Where there is no excellence, no best possible, there is no aestheticism. If anything is over-done, over-charged, over-laden; if balance is lacking, or proportion missing; if high ideals be ignored, or taste be absent, then the aesthetic feature has no existence. In life there is nothing aesthetic about vice, wickedness, social unrest, civil disorders, depravity, illiteracy, slums, etc. Aesthetic refers to the beautiful, to the philosophy of the beautiful, consequently weaknesses, moral and social troubles, cannot figure in its category.

When an aesthetic is spoken of, something exclusive is implied, something of an aristocratic flavour, for the arts, literature, artistic work, architecture, sculpture, etc., are produced for a minority of the human race—the masses have no interest in art, no time for literature, little or no vitality for the things of the spirit. It is for the minority that all books are written, that pictures are painted, that music is composed; these are the work of the soul. Human achievements most worthy of remembrance have their origin in the spirit; such works the race values.

Coleridge in the twelfth chapter of the "Biographia Literaria," gives his readers an indication of what is meant by aesthetics, and what can be considered the best things in life. Coleridge also attempted to formulate a new type of criticism—such a type is now termed aesthetics, rather than literary criticism. The idea was to experience the rich and

rare works of art, and to have the emotion stirred by them, while an aesthetic expression in its essential nature is a process of reflecting as by a mirror. Aesthetics demands discrimination; some writers hold that it is a subjective form imposed by the mind on experience.

There is a distinct relation between art and aesthetics. To make works of art is a noble human activity. Some works of art are beautiful, but art and beauty are not the same thing. The (1) most serious obstacle to understand either art or aesthetic is the failure to distinguish between them. If only art occasions aesthetic experience, or if beauty is found only in works of art, the result is bound to be perplexing—one is a quality found in form by contemplation; the other is a classification of sensory patterns produced by technique. Our experience of beauty includes things other than works of art.

In recent years more aesthetic systems are marked by a laudable effort to be less pedantic and academic, to escape from libraries where thinkers read and write, or visit places where works of art can be seen. Aesthetics figures as an activity, as well as a product. Order is the aesthetic quality par excellence, but co-ordination, harmony and unity in variety, are all factors necessary to arouse the conjunctive faculties to intense action. The objective conditions of the beautiful according to St. Thomas, are three:— Integrity or perfection, due order or proportion, clarity or splendour. A work then is said to be beautiful, in so far as it corresponds to an idea which is the exemplary cause, after which it is conceived and effected. A work is beautiful if it shows perfection, if everything is in harmony, if, as in Shakespeare, when it is said that he is supreme in the poetry of action, he makes one of his characters speak of an action and that action comes before one as a reality.

There are aesthetic laws; there is an aesthetic sense; there is also an aesthetic education, and such education completes and crowns our life—without it our human nature cannot ripen, since it opens to us the poetry of life, which is the complete harmonic development of all the strings of our human being. If the contemplation of something beautiful arouses pleasurable feelings, this effect is distinct from the beautiful as such. A beautiful (2) object may be placed before an observer with the avowed purpose of giving him pleasure, but this purpose in no way effects the beauty of the object. The beautiful is and remains beautiful, though it arouses no emotion whatever, and though there be no one to look at it. The beautiful

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(1) A Manual of Modern School Philosophy. ( Cardinal Mercier).

(2) The Beautiful in Music (Max Schoen).

exists for the gratification of an observer, but it is independent of him. An art aims above all at producing something beautiful, which affects not the feelings of the beholder, but the organ of pure contemplation, the imagination.

The aesthetic process would seem to work in this manner. An individual looks at a picture, and after a careful perusal he either beholds it as a work of art, or he merely sees it as a picture, a physical fact; he listens to Handel's "Largo", and either he recognises the work as a musical masterpiece, or merely as a tune; he reads a poem and the result is either a mental delight in what is read or merely the recognition of a *libre* verse; he reads a novel by an author—say Dickens, and he regards it as one of great sound philosophic significance which excites his imagination, or as a mere play on the sentiment; he studies the oratorical efforts of W. C. Wentworth, during his parliamentary career in New South Wales, and sees in his speeches quality equal to, or possibly superior to those speeches delivered by Burke in the House of Commons, and he gets carried away with their excellence, or he views such a politician merely as a ranter.

To come to simpler things, the individual takes a flower in his hand, or he looks at a gem, or beholds a Madonna, or observes a sunset, or places himself in a good position to view Govett's Leap, or Mt. Victoria as seen from the Blue Mountains. If the individual sees no more than the mere thing in front of him, then no aesthetic sense comes into play. The aesthetic judgment decides what is beautiful; the aesthetic perceives more than what is on the surface in the case of the flower, the gem, the Madonna, or the mountain scene. When Wordsworth wrote:—

"To me the meanest flower that blooms can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

his aesthetic was at work, and combined with it was his mystical specialty. The aesthetic produces in one a sort of inner delight, an inexpressible happiness. It may be also noted, too, that the finer (1) the virtue of a literary word, or the nobler the dress or expression of a work of art, the richer and rarer its art and its contents—the keener is the aesthetic vision required for its full appreciation.

The aesthetic varies in degree; some people have a higher aesthetic registration than others, and it is possible, we like those people better whose aesthetic appears to be on a level with our own, hence our interest in what another says, or the keenness displayed to know what his avocation is. The

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(1) Judgment and Appreciation of Literature. (T. G. Tucker).



aesthetic of one keeps him away from some locations, and makes him eager to be present at others. When an opinion is asked relative to a poem, a piece of prose, or a work of art, if the production reaches up to the aesthetic ideal of the judge, then the verdict is satisfactory; if it falls below, condemnation follows.

To talk about art is one thing, to apprehend it is another. Art has two parts—the work of art that is observed, and secondly the creative power in it. When a person visits a picture gallery, he sees first the pictures there, and as such there is no aesthetic appreciation; but if he sees in the picture what the artist saw, or what he sought to convey to his observers, i.e., the vision he had before him, then the aesthetic operates. When I read the poems of Shakespeare, Milton, Shelley, Keats, and the production of our Australian writers—poetry and prose, and I say to myself after a few moments of enjoyable reading and concentrated thought, is not that lovely? What does it really mean? What are the implications, what is its underlying philosophy, etc.? The thoughts in the piece read, the ideas that emanate from it, the significance of the whole, give rise in me to a feeling of happiness, for I am enjoying the charm, the delight, the paradise of the aesthetic.

For an illustration, let us take a poem—"The Grand Cortège," by Christopher Brennan. The poem when first read appears to hide its meaning, but when perused again and again, reveals that the poet is expressing a thought that must come to many a man, when he revisits scenes of the past and realises that changes have occurred and that desolation everywhere prevails, but that he alone lives on, a sort of regretful guest. The warmth of the past, the associations that once kindled the chill-air are all missing to the visitor; and if the present waste refuses shelter, it would be wise for him to creep into the old church that still remains, and behind its old iron choir, its rust tombs and blazons, the only apparent friendly item to be observed in the gloom, and there "devise proud anthems in a long forgotten tongue"—as a preparation for the hereafter and to show youth how futile is joy that fails to last, how vain is glory that is temporal.

Christopher Brennan has declined to follow several traditional rules in this short poem of twenty-four lines, but yet there is rhyme, somewhat irregular to be sure; there are hyphenated words—vesper-flight, wind-blown, etc.; there are several good examples of alliteration; there are beautiful lines, e.g., "the old church stands on our morning's track," meaning that when we are young and under parental discipline, the

church plays a significant part in our life, and "Proud an-thems in a long forgotten tongue," meaning that the mem-ories of youth and early education, the hymns sung, the ideals held, etc., return to the man in advancing years. The poem is full of meaning—symbolic "in excelsis"—every line calls for analysis, the beauty of the poem dawns on one quietly, sweetly, surely—it is possible that it requires training and skill to appreciate its aesthetic in full, to gauge comprehensively its aesthetic quality, and to awaken fully to its aesthetic response. The poem is also a mystic one—the author evidently is some-what disappointed with life, and what has been his portion; he wishes to pursue again the line of his youth, "an isle of light is bosomed" in it, and by following it, to meet with better results, and thus make sure of the "here-after."

The poet in his twenty-four lines with his metre, tech-nique, and his disregard for traditional forms, indicates to his readers the mere scaffolding of his poem, but aesthetically considered, it is the heart and soul of the poem that are essential. While the form is important, it is the artistic expression half revealed, half concealed in the poem, that matters.

Dealing with judgments, it does not follow that all aes-thetic judgments are the same—in fact, they are often very diverse, even among educated people. Some aesthetic verdicts appear, at times, to be paradoxical. e.g. The bull-dog is ugly to look at, yet to some reliable authorities it is beautiful. A woman's face is beautiful because it is fair, and yet a black woman could be beautiful too, and then again a work of art might require time and education to grasp its power, and in-tense study to realise the appeal of its beauty. Some authors and artists even find it necessary to create the taste to make themselves appreciated.

It often happens that one is trained in a certain school of thought, and consequently his aesthetic ideals run along the lines of that training with a reluctance to accept another aesthetic ideal. It is a common experience that men and women brought up in the school of Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning, Shelley, Keats, Coleridge and Scott, find it a little difficult to take to Australian poets—they feel the English ones are superior, and that the Australian poets figure on a lower scale. The verdict of the aesthetic, however, clearly points out that Australian poetry in many cases is far superior to European productions. Bernard O'Dowd, a leading Aus-tralian poet, on one occasion in a lecture given to the mem-bers of the Australian Literature Society, mentioned three poems that he considered equal to, or even superior to the best that has been written in any language. It would seem

that people are inclined to stress what they know well, to set value on the old ideas to the detriment of the new, to laud the past and belittle the present, to uphold and appraise former movements, but to display little interest in such changes as take place in their own time or in their own land.

It might be mentioned here that the all absorbing interest in the arts tends to carry one away from the actual in life to the ideal. As the ideal is approached, there results a tendency to revert to the actual. Thus when a tune is first heard, it is appreciated, and perhaps thought to be supremely beautiful. If heard too frequently, the ideal begins to fade, and a new one comes into play. The same is true of a poem or of a painting, yet it is also possible that something new is elucidated with each reading of the poem, or with each observation of the painting.

It is a common aesthetic experience that an individual becomes so transfixed before a painting that the translation of the message into a form of articulate speech is impossible; he becomes "disturbed with the presence of elevated thought;" he is silent with the revelation of the beautiful. Music, poetry and art often disclose to their followers the secrets of the Beautiful; they take them to the realms where Truth, Goodness and Beauty reside in their elements. It is the glory of music, and the same can be said of poetry and art, that it is difficult to put into the framework of language what it has signified or disclosed to its listeners.

The subject of aestheticism is a complex one; to explain what the Beautiful is leads to a discussion of philosophies and a conflict of ideas, but in all the theories devised by aestheticians as to what constitutes the Beautiful whether in a literary masterpiece, a fine painting, an architectural wonder, or a symphony, three conclusions can be drawn. (1) that (1) the beautiful always pleases, and that the plain and ugly leave people indifferent or displeased. —(*Pulchra dicuntur quae visa placent*). (2) That aesthetic pleasure springs from the active perception of certain relations that a work realises. (3) The perception which gives rise to aesthetic pleasure consists in an understanding of the value of the elements which make up the perfection of a work, and it entails therefore a comparison between the work and the ideal to which it was meant to give expression.

The source of aesthetic pleasure lies with the perceptive faculties. They afford one this pleasure when, by their exercise he comes to appreciate the perfection of a work by the

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(1) *A Manual of School Philosophy.* (Cardinal Mercier).

standard of its ideal. The perception of the beautiful implies a vigorous action on the part of the cognitive faculties.

A work (1) of art has its unity destroyed by distraction. A lesson in appreciation suffers from interference, if there is any intellectual annoyance, if there is any intellectual distraction. A work of art cannot be fully appreciated by one who is uneasy in mind, or who is worrying over unsolved problems, i.e., extraneous stimuli unrelated to the poem, or the symphony or the picture, or the work of sculpture that is under consideration. An aesthetic value, too, must not be confused with an ethical one. Ethical values deal with the good and the non-good, but aesthetic values deal with the beautiful and the non-beautiful; the ethical value is inclusive, the other is exclusive. The good and the non-good can exist at the same time, thus medicine for one may be poison for another at the same moment. A beautiful thing, however, cannot be at the same time beautiful and non-beautiful to the same person. Literature cannot be beautiful on Monday and non-beautiful on Tuesday. When I say the thing is bad, the judgment is an ethical one, not an aesthetic one; the ethical value is a derived one, but the beautiful is intrinsic. Food is good; it fulfils a certain function; medicine is also good, since it cures one, but the goodness is derived from something extraneous to the object. | The Beautiful (2), however, is not a derived value; it is beautiful because it is beautiful; it owes its beauty to nothing beyond itself; it leans on nothing, it is self-supporting. The Beautiful is of the thing, while the good is about the thing.

The Essayist, F. P. Cobble, arranged the arts in three classes—the primary, the secondary, and the tertiary. In the first he placed the creation, in the second, the reproduction, and in the third the enjoyment. Thus—In poetry, the first class is represented by the creation, the second by the recitation, the third by the appreciation. In music, the composition, the execution, and the enjoyment represent the stages. The aesthetic comes along with these to insist that all the stages shall be on a high plane. When the whole three classes are responsible for an aesthetic experience or experiences in an individual, or when, say in a picture (1) or a statue, he finds the charm lying in both the ideas conveyed and in the form, he is face to face with art of the highest order.

A true (3) concept of aesthetics must itself be an aesthetic. The jury which sits in judgment upon a poet belonging as he does to all time, or upon an artist whose work gives a uni-

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(1) The Beautiful in Music. (Max Schoen).

(2) Lesson in Appreciation. (F. H. Hayward).

(3) The Aesthetes. (W. J. Turner).

fied impression in which the spirit can rest, must be composed of his peers; it must be empanelled by time from the selected of the wise of many generations.

This chapter concludes by insisting that a training in aesthetics is necessary. For one to know the aesthetic history of the past, or to be told who wrote the great masterpieces, or who figures as the greatest painter of the different centuries, or who were the great musicians, architects, sculptors, etc., of past generations, does not interest aesthetics, such details do not concern the philosophy of art; while to know when life (1) is aesthetically promising, or aesthetically dead or alive, is the mere side-show in the aesthetic field.

Aesthetics will not even teach one to write poetry, compose music, paint beautiful pictures, build homes, etc., but it will enable him to appreciate poetry, i.e., good poetry, fine music, ornate painting, and ideal homes.

Aesthetics (2) will train one to appreciate high standards in the novelist's art, to admire elegance of style, loftiness of sentiments, beauty of expression, informed and critical analysis on the part of the artist, and above all to recognise the quest of the passionate pilgrim in search of knowledge, to acclaim taste and the attainment of perfection as far as is humanly possible.

### THE AESTHETIC WRITERS.

In discussing the philosophy of Australian aestheticism it might be well to note what the philosophers of the past and the wise men of the present have had to say relative to the aesthetic ideal, and their conception of what constitutes Beauty. Some of the writers deal with the aesthetic of literature, others with the aesthetic of art, others again with art in general.

In the latter half of the 18th century the term aesthetic was adopted with the meaning now recognised, in order to designate the philosophy of the Beautiful as a distinct province of philosophical enquiry. Aesthetic then means, "the Philosophy of the Beautiful." The history of the aesthetic theory is a narrative which traces the aesthetic consciousness in its intellectual form of aesthetic theory, but never forget, that the central matter to be elucidated is the value of Beauty for human life.

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(1) *L'Education Moderne*. (M. Cousmet).

(2) *An Essay on Critical Appreciation*. (R. W. Church).

Although the term aesthetic was adopted in the 18th century, it does not follow that prior to that time the study was not known, or that its philosophy was not a matter of interest. True aesthetic analysis among the Greeks extended only to the most formal element that entered into Hellenic beauty. Hellenic antiquity recognised one true aesthetic principle—the principle that beauty consisted in the imaginative or sensuous expression of unity in variety.

The perfection of the whole man, the enrichment of his personality by a many-sided contact with life was a Greek Ideal. From the time of the Renaissance, the artistic world was emphasised, and the world listened to Plato teaching across the centuries that to beautify and harmonise our nature, poetry and music were needed, that the appreciation of the beautiful in art and literature, harmony, and most important of all—the art of living a beautiful and cultured life is a noble aim, a beautiful ideal of the nobler man; while to be an agent and spokesman of the great minds and spirits of the past, was the world's noblest conception.

Plotinus (1) (3rd century) held an aesthetic theory, but his was one of emanation rather than of evolution. Throughout the Middle Ages the aesthetic consciousness continued, but its presence gave an intellectual impression, and during those centuries the earth blossomed with beautiful buildings and Cathedrals, all aesthetic architectural triumphs.

From the time of Plotinus to the 18th century there was an intermission of aesthetic philosophy—but writers of different countries, and men of varying viewpoints, tried to establish a theoretical reunion between content and expression. The Germans put forward the theory of Idealism, the English mind travelled by a different road, and attributed aesthetic effect mainly to association. Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz and Wolff gave their philosophies an intellectual character.

Baumgarten (1714-1762) extended the Cartesian doctrine to the phenomena of feeling and perception under the name of "Aesthetica," and today the term aesthetic is the accepted title for the philosophy of the beautiful.

When German writers, in particular, gave their attention to aesthetic study, G. T. Fechner had the honour of being the founder of modern aesthetics. He treated the newly discovered science of the beautiful as a particular branch of general psychology, or as a special department of hedonics—the doctrine of pleasure and pain. He began the method (2) "von Unten," proceeding from the part to the general, in place of the old method of metaphysics—the philosophical method

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(1) History of Aesthetic. (Bosanquet). Page 182.

(2) Vorshule der Aesthetik. (Fechner).

"von Oben," according to which, the investigator discovers from the most general concepts to the concrete and particular instance. Fechner, in his two stout volumes, lays down his thirteen psychological laws which govern the affective life of man.

Of the numerous writers in aesthetics in recent times, perhaps the more prominent are Bosanquet, Hegel and W. T. Stace. Others like Croce, whose interpretation is lyrical and whose theory is partly speculation and partly historical; Santayana, whose method is psychological, and Lalo, who views aesthetics through sociological eyes, are also reliable authorities. The value of a work of art for Lalo is a variable, or to adopt his own terminology, an evolving phenomenon.

E. F. Carritt and R. G. Collingwood, two Oxford Professors, emphasised the work of Croce, the great protagonist of expressionism. Beauty for Carritt was the expression of emotion, and all such expression is beautiful. Hegel's treatment of the Ideal is the greatest single step that has ever been made in aesthetics—Kant had excluded it from his aesthetic, because of its relation to the will. Among other aestheticians of note are Gentile, M. Porena, H. R. Marshall, G. Santayana, J. M. Guyan, Grant Allen, Kant, K. Lange, K. Groos, von Hartmann Schiller, Freud, Katherine Gilbert, and J. Maritain.

Croce's aesthetic (1) seems to have made a big impression on the aesthetic world, it received more criticism than other philosophies of aesthetics; and one criticism in particular levelled against it, is that the author fails to knit (2) together in any concrete fashion the one and the many; he furnishes for his readers a collection of aperçus and images, rather than a system of ideas. He belongs rather to the company of those who make the world interesting, rather than to the school of scholars who satisfy the mind's demand for intelligibility.

Croce banished stereotyped classes from his aesthetics. To ask in face of a work of art whether it is a religious painting, or a portrait, a problem play, or a melodrama, post cubist or pre-futurist, is in reality according to him, an ingenious confession of aesthetic bankruptcy—as to demand its title or subject. The intuition (2) of beauty is itself and nothing else; itself is its final category. It is a mistake says Croce, to suppose that there are artistic geniuses on the one hand, touched, as we enthusiastically say, with fire from heaven; and ordinary mortals on the other, who have no part in their

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(1) *Studies in Recent Aesthetic.* (Katherine Gilbert).

(2) *Ibid.*

gifts and happy fortune. Great artists are said to reveal us to ourselves, but how can this be possible, unless there be identity of nature between their imagination and ours—the distinction is quantity.

No books, as far as can be ascertained, have been written on Australian Aesthetics, even the philosophic books by Australians are mainly criticisms or expositions in character, being studies of the works of eminent European thinkers. The contributions are works of no mean merit and though critico-expository in treatment are not without constructive features, which show that the writers have definite philosophical predilections and are capable of independent thought. In the Australian Universities Henry Laurie was one of the first Professors of Philosophy (1886-1911); F. Anderson, 1890—Sydney, and Wm. Mitchell, Adelaide (1894-1923) were others who helped to pave the way for men and women to become interested in philosophical speculation and to introduce the Australian public to the value of aesthetic considerations and studies.



## CHAPTER TWO.

### THE AUSTRALIAN BACKGROUND.

Australia is a lonely continent situated on the fringe of the world, and quite detached from world history; it was the last continent to be discovered and colonised, but quite a recent land to provide a political, historical, social and educational background.

Australia, the newest of the continents from a settlement point of view, is, however, old geologically—actually the oldest part of the earth's surface rising above the waters. According to geologists (1) it slumbered away under Southern skies almost from the beginning of geological time; it antedates America and Europe, for its surviving forms of an older life—the floral specimens and genus of marsupial animals and egg-laying mammals which have disappeared from other parts of the world.

The fossil remains found in Australia are evidence of life in times gone by, while the skulls of extinct marsupials discovered in Queensland in 1921, at a depth of seventy feet of clay, record unmistakably an historic past. The glacial beds of Bacchus Marsh, where exist glacial deposits up to 500 feet, indicate, according to Dr. Hall (2) the remnants of a past ice age. Even Inland Australia, now so lacking in fertility, boasted once of shallow ordovician seas, containing abundant life-forms, varied in many respects, but archaic compared with what is found there today.

Australia has a coast-line of 12,000 miles. From North to South its length is 2,000 miles, while from East to West it stretches over 2,000 miles. Its shores are mostly cliff-bordered; its entrances, for the most part, are uninviting, "never was a continent so keen to make the worst of itself."

As regards physiography, Australia is very compact, its configuration is simple and uniform, it has practically no high mountains, its rivers are few and only one—the Murray, is of any considerable size. Its surface (1) represents three well-defined divisions: (a) The Western plateau, (b) An Eastern highland region, (c) An intermediate lowland region. The coastal areas are fertile, its great plains are favourable for

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(1) Australian Geology. (W. B. Clarke).

(2) Victorian Hill and Dale. (T. S. Hall).

(3) Geography of Victoria. (J. W. Gregory).

pastures, but the vast interior is almost barren and can be regarded as waste country—a part of the world without rainfall, inhabitants or industry.

Australia by reason of its size, enjoys the privilege of having several types of climate. Its insularity, the absence of high mountains, its situation in the Southern sphere, have helped to a degree to regulate the climate and give it the diversity that is its peculiar characteristic.

As the North is within the tropics, tropical heat is experienced and tropical conditions prevail. The climate of the middle and Southern parts can be considered temperate and conducive to industry. From West to East a succession (1) of "Highs" and "Lows" blow; occasionally hot winds from the North, or cold blasts from the South, make their presence felt. The rainfall is good on the coastal areas; it declines as the centre of Australia is reached. Artesian wells and bores help to provide water for the inland areas, making apparently unpromising areas rich in mysterious supplies of underground water which is now being tapped on a large scale.

In Fauna and Flora, Australia displays a succession of strange and primitive types that make the land of the South according to Professor Wood (2) "a museum of ambiguities under Australian skies. There are no wild animals like those found in Europe and Asia, but the dingo, the kangaroo, the wallaby, the platypus, the echidna, wombat, koala, etc., present to the visitor oddities and peculiarities, archaic features and differences from the rest of the animal world brought about by the isolation of countless centuries. (3) In the quantity and quality of vegetation, Australia is unique; the tree forms, the primitive conifers, the old blue-green foliferous trees, etc., are all of an ancient type. The forest area is estimated at 70,000,000 acres—the land is a country of eucalypts or gums, acacias, fir-trees, hardwoods, and soft woods; the trees of Australia are among the most beautiful specimens the soil can produce.

Australia, so different from the rest of the world, presents to the newly arrived on its shores, strange features. He finds things widely different from the way they exist in European countries. He discovers that the birds are as curious as the animals; that the eagles are white, the swans black, the deciduous trees that shed their leaves in England, shed their bark in Australia.

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(1) Geography of Victoria. (J. W. Gregory).

(2) The Pacific Basin. (G. L. Wood).

(3) The Pacific Basin. (G. L. Wood).

He finds in the cities that the streets are historic in their significance, being called after the familiar names of English Statesmen. He soon discovers, too, that Australia has its problems arising from the remoteness of the country from the centres of civilisation, and from the character of the people.

The Continent with an area of 3,000,000 square miles is a country of big distances, of waste land and unoccupied territories, of long railway journeys, of vast plains and forests, of extended agricultural areas and mining activities. Industry flourishes in the settled areas; pastoral pursuits and grazing propositions are responsible for the wealth of its primary products. The wool (1), according to Professor Hancock, made Australia independent. In the cities and inland towns, manufactures and trade production represent prosperity for the secondary interests; an economic impulse dominates the people as a whole.

Many national parks protect the presence of the Koala and other native animals that would naturally diminish, or even disappear due to the onward march of civilisation, and many parts of Australia by reason of the situation, or the natural scenery displayed will remain untouched by the hand of man, or, as in the case of the Grampians, the Dandenongs, Mt. Buffalo, the Blue Mountains, Mt. Kosciusko, etc., will always stand out as natural monuments to enable the visitor and tourist to enjoy to the full their beauty, their splendour, and their irresistible fascination.

Australia is rich in shrubs and plants, wild flowers, native growths and imported flowers. The gorgeous Waratah, with its 300 varieties, possesses the characteristics of several plants—it is regarded as the floral emblem of the Commonwealth. Natural resources abound in each State; the land "overflowing with milk and honey", is a reservoir of things old and new; its soil provides facilities and opportunities that do not exist in older countries, and holds out golden inducements to its people and bestows its rewards—material, spiritual and aesthetic on those who are interested in its welfare and labour for its further development.

The Australian people have a unity of aim and sentiment—a unity due to their homogeneity, and a common humanity exists which is the basis of their democracy. The Australian enjoys freedom from aristocratic insolence; he knows little of the evils of poverty; the atmosphere gives him a special strength and vigour, while the sunny sky under which he lives and the great country of which he is so proud, give him an independence and a courage that are his special possession.

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(1) Australia. (Hancock).

The nation's disassociated history has re-acted on its people. A nation daring and adventurous holds loosely to tradition; it cares little for privileges for the few, and resents the assumption of rights based on any feudal idea. The Australians are not transplanted Englishmen; they have an individuality of their own which is not an inheritance from their forefathers; they belong to a free nation and they will labour to build it up and keep it free. "The Australians (1) have adopted this policy, because they believe it to be necessary for the preservation of their nationality, both in its ideal and racial aspect. Like other peoples, the Australians are attempting to embody their national ideals in their economical social and political life." Because of the lack of personal contacts in the past, Australian Ideals have been but partially understood or imperfectly interpreted.

It is (2) a matter for discussion to know who were the first people to land in Australia. In the Middle Ages the Chinese, Malays and Arabs were supposed to have visited its shores. On a globe found in Paris there is an inscription indicating that Terra Australis was discovered in 1494. There is tangible evidence that Dirck Hartogs landed at Shark Bay, W.A. in 1616. William Dampier visited the North-Western shores in 1688. Captain Cook sailed along the East Coast in 1770, and entered Botany Bay, and when he returned to England in June 1771, he offered the continent of Australia as a prize to his King, but his present, at first, was not graciously accepted. However, five years later, 1786, the British Government resolved to colonise Australia for its own convenience and as a result, the first fleet of eleven ships under the command of Naval Captain Arthur Phillip arrived at Botany Bay, Jan 18th, 1788.

When Botany Bay was found unsuitable for a permanent settlement, on Jan. 26th a move was made to Port Jackson, and Sydney, called after the Prime Minister of England, was the name given to the new settlement. From that small beginning great results followed; from the unpropitious seed of the first settlement, by reason of the climate, the isolation, the sunshine, the natural resources, the fertile soil and the quality of the free settlers, a nation grew. When more ships arrived, the settlement developed, difficulties arose but were surmounted; obstacles lost their terrors for the free settlers and by 1840, so much progress had been made that Strzlecki tells us in his book that he was amazed at what he saw in Sydney and the headway that the Southern Capital had made.

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(1) N.S.W. Parl. Debates, 1888. Page 4782. (Sir Henry Parkes).

(2) A Foreigner Looks at Australia. (Paul Staal).

The people who came to Australia were a selected lot. Men and women who travelled so far, and who faced the difficulties incidental to a perilous sea-trip from 1790-1840, when a voyage from the British Isles meant in some cases a period of four to six months, were a hardy and courageous people: they were fitted to be pioneers in a new land, settlers in an enterprising country and enthusiasts for economic, social and cultural advances—similar in some cases, but more advanced in other instances than what obtained in the British Isles from whence most came.

The spirit that animated those settling on the Eastern coast of Australia was strikingly the same as that which characterised the people of the South and of the West; all had a firm belief in the great possibilities ahead; all were zealous advocates of what furthered the interests of their particular Colony; all were enthusiastic to persuade others to immigrate and build up the industries and set going the machinery to develop the potentialities of their newly adopted country.

The Australian pioneers often lacked the means of comfort and convenience; the ordinary implements of labour in many cases were, for them, difficult to secure; they were frequently handicapped by the absence of supplies; their best efforts were frustrated by the oddity of the weather in their new world, but they possessed that stamina and that masterly intelligence necessary in men chosen to build up a new country.

Ballou (1) in 1888, speaking of Australia said it was an empire won without war, a new world called into existence by moral forces, an Eldorado captured without the sword—"It is a land where nature has spread her favours broadcast over a land only slightly smaller than the whole continent of Europe, granting every needed resource wherewith ultimately to form a great independent province; where labour is more liberally rewarded, and life more easily sustained. Australia possesses a soil of great fertility, while the hills, valleys and plains abound in mineral wealth—inexhaustible in quantity and unsurpassed in quality."

Although Free Settlers arrived in New South Wales from the date of its foundation, still it was about 1820 when the Immigrants began to arrive in fairly large numbers. After 1851, when the discovery of gold was made, the population increased rapidly. Even when three generations had elapsed after the arrival of Phillip's fleet in 1788 on Australian shores, those who came out were of English descent, and when they arrived they saw around them signs of English industry,

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(1) Under the Southern Cross. (M. M. Ballou).

manners, customs, outlook, etc.; they found people speaking their own language, displaying their own facial and physical characteristics, but yet the society into which they entered was quite changed from their own—the dress varied a little, the manners were less formal, the amusements differed, the conversation and tone of thought appeared inexpressibly odd. The gold rush broke down further the social barriers that were beginning to disappear, the diggers were in reality the "Pilgrim Fathers", the men who were considered the first authentic Australians, the founders to a certain extent, of its democracy, nationalism and social outlook.

The new Englishman to arrive noted, too, how the papers described every occurrence—significant or otherwise: a cricketing dinner, a Methodist meeting, the arrival of an important person, the death of a local sportsman etc., was chronicled as an event of great importance.

The man from the "Old Country" soon learned that the Australian believed firmly in the superiority of his sportsmen, his horses, his athletes, his orators, his railways, his national products, and his wonderful continent; that he had more faith in facts than theories, more interest in records than conjectures, and yet strangely enough, more trust in spiritual bonds than in those of force.

Australia of today, 1949, is the development of what it tried to be in 1850, when the surge for separation into different colonies began, and in 1851 when the movement for self-government in the colonies became a reality—a movement that was finally completed by 1855. Australia, too, put into practice, soon after the achievement of self-government, many of the ideals of the English Chartists. In 1900, a Federation of the Australian States took place, and in 1901, its first Federal Parliament was opened. Since Federation Days, Australia has developed considerably in the sociological sphere as well as in the political one—in both departments the Commonwealth has secured pre-eminence. In some respects Australia has been considered a field for political and social experiments—a policy and a progressive movement that has given her prominence in the world.

Two world wars 1914-1918, and 1939-1945, indicated Australia's prowess, and her keenness to defend the Empire and her own shores, as well as her desire to maintain the Peace of the World. The Second world war enabled Australia to put forward 1,000,000 of her 7½ million population in the battle front, and in the factories specially organised to provide munitions for the war. The present population of almost 8,000,000 is so arranged that 60% of the people are situated in the big

towns, while 40% represent those engaged in industry on the land, or in providing for the wants of those living in the urban areas.

Ballou speaking of the changes he saw in Australia said that the oak had been transplanted; it was rooted in a different soil; it had forgotten the rough winds, while the leaves of the transplanted tree showed the effect of the change.

"The Australian (1) history and climate have combined to give the people their high spirits, their warmth of temperament, their frank, cordial manners, their freedom from reserve, their capacity for enjoyment. The Australian is taller, their spirits higher, their physical vigour more abounding than the people of England. I think that among all my young Australian friends it would be hard to find anyone to whom it has ever occurred to ask 'is life worth living?'"

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(1) Under the Southern Cross. (M. M. Ballou).

## CHAPTER THREE.

**THE BEGINNINGS AND HISTORY OF AUSTRALIAN  
AESTHETICISM.**

Australia borrowed its aesthetic from England, but almost from the beginning of its political existence in 1788, and during its early Colonial life traces, suggestions, influences and movements were at work indicating that another culture and aesthetic were in the course of formation. The Australian foundation had little to recommend it from the cultural and aesthetical point of view; the quality of its people, the instruments available for furthering social and cultural progress, the unsatisfactory economic conditions existing, the method of government in vogue—all tended to frustrate any efforts to find expression for the greatest art—the art of life, and to create the atmosphere that facilitates the development of culture, and gives rise to the aesthetic in art, literature and life, “tending to immortalise (1) all that is best and most beautiful in the world”, and to establish on the wonderful Australian soil useful reservoirs of spiritual energy.

Notwithstanding the drawbacks of the early Australian foundation small cultural groups formed here and there, and their existence indicated the desire of the early colonists to rise above their material setting, and the environment associated with the labours and endeavours incidental to the establishment of a British Colony in the South Seas.

Governor Phillip worked indefatigably to develop the settlement with his unpropitious material. Governor Hunter continued the work with varying success for a few years, and he, in his turn, was followed by Governors King and Bligh. During the period 1788-1810, there were few men and women among the military commanders and the few free settlers, who were scholars, or who possessed more than the ordinary rudiments of knowledge, but it was not until the time of Governor Macquarie that positive cultural tendencies became noticeable in the Australian environment. About the same time, too, the aesthetic sense was first observed, and the aesthetic judgment with its canons of beauty, truth, and appreciation came into view.

However, before Macquarie's arrival two men—the fathers of Australian aestheticism, merit careful consideration. They were the first noted scholars in early New South Wales—Lieutenant William Dawes, and Captain Watkins Tench. Dawes (2) was a man of letters—a scientist, an explorer, a student of

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(1) A Defence of Poetry. (P. B. Shelley).

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(2) Vol. X, Royal Aust. Hist. Soc.



languages, an authority on anthropology, astronomy, botany, survey-work and literature, but he wrote almost nothing. What we know of him, we learn from others. He founded an observatory on a point which still bears his name, and his observatory became the home of culture in the newly formed community. In one of the small rooms of that observatory Captain Tench discussed with him whether the language of the natives had a dual number similar to the Greeks, or, whether their language had any connection with that of the Eastern people. The two men made a summary of their investigations, not only in the field of the language of the natives, but also in the sphere of their morality and culture.

Dawes (1) in his observatory frequently gave Mrs. John McArthur lessons in astronomy and botany; he introduced her to the methods of surveying and the beauties of classical literature; he drew her attention to the charm of Horace's lyrics, and the ornateness of Cicero's prose. Dawes was the first teacher in the new land to make another understand and appreciate, what was select and beautiful in the works of others; he was one of the few who radiated happiness in the early convict colony of 1790; he was among the first to love his adopted country and to wish to settle in it. Differences, however, arose with Governor Phillip and disputes—two of a serious nature, made it necessary for him to leave New South Wales, but before he left he attempted to cross the Blue Mountains and as an engineer and skilled surveyor, he laid out the towns of Sydney and Parramatta, laying down the line of streets and bringing the chaos of the first settlement into order. When he returned to England about 1793 he was sent out to Sierra Leone as Governor. While Dawes was in England, it was proposed by Wilberforce that he should be made the first Superintendent of Education in New South Wales, but the proposal was not carried out. According to Professor Wood (2), Dawes was the type of man, that had he been at the Sydney University, he might have been professor of half a dozen different subjects. He died in 1836.

Captain Watkins Tench was a man of a kind and gracious nature and of a vivacity of character—he had a good word for everybody—the Governor, the officers, the Rev. Richard Johnson, and especially a welcome for the first arrivals. As a writer his books retained a unique value and an interesting account of day-to-day experiences and reflections associated with his new sphere of activity. He described the suffering of

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(1) Hist. Records of N.S.W. Vol. 1, Part 2, Page 543.

(2) Lecture Delivered to R.A.H. Society, August, 1923.

the early colonists, the joy of relief when food arrived, the difficulties of agriculture, the explorations he carried out, the psychology displayed by the Australian natives, and yet all the time he retained his interest in English life and politics, and wished to return to England to die there.

Tench in his books shows no pedantry, but displays a keenness and a culture of mind, deep knowledge and a trained intellect, plus practical values and psychological insight. His literary style was enhanced by colour from classical studies, and strength from the literatures of England, France and Italy. Captain Tench returned to England in 1794, and in 1795, became a prisoner-of-war in France. On his release, he continued his army work in England and in 1811 (1), was made a major-general. By means of his letters he retained some interest in New South Wales, the place where he had spent six years. He died at the age of 74 in the year 1833.

When Governor Macquarie arrived in New South Wales in 1812 he planned to develop the Colony along ideal lines. He was responsible for building a road from Parramatta over the Blue Mountains to Bathurst; he erected numerous public buildings in Sydney and its neighbourhood; churches and schools owed their rise to his patronage and direction; his architect—Greenway devoted his energy to the construction of many edifices, some of which even to this day bear witness to his skill and to his aesthetic appreciation of beauty and harmony. He gave unmistakable (2) evidence of that genuine artistic spirit which loves the good work and makes every effort to bring it to perfection.

From 1820 onwards there were in early Australia a few eminent and scholarly men who helped to build up the colonies, in quality and tone to make them an ideal place for British settlers. In addition to the work of individuals, we note the foundations of societies and institutions from the year 1820 up to the present time.

The philosophical society founded in 1821 was an institution that raised the cultural tone of the rising Colony, and developed in it an aesthetic appreciation for things spiritual, as well as creating the environment favourable to inspiration. The discussions carried on in the society, and its interest in all that was educative and instructive, was of great assistance to the early Sydneyites, even though the membership of the society was small, and its meetings were often irregular. The rules of the Society and some of the theses upheld and discussed at the meetings, may still be read and studied in the

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(2) *Appreciation of Beauty.* (F. W. Westaway).

(1) *Journal of the Aust. His. Soc., Vol. 11, Part 8.*

Mitchell Library, Sydney. The papers indicate that even in those early days, there existed a keen desire to learn the opinions of the great men of the past, in order to secure guidance for individual advancement, and to watch the stages by which they became dissolved in the universal, or to use a modern phrase, sublimated.

Two early papers presented to the Philosophical Society were—One by Commander King, who on October 2nd, 1822, read a paper "On the Maritime Geography of Australia". (2) In the paper he discussed the voyages of Flinders and those conducted by himself. He also dealt with the geology of the coast line, the general production of the inter-tropical part of Australia and the part the aborigines played in the Australian Story. For the 2nd paper Lt. John Oxley, R.N., described his expedition to Moreton Bay in the H.M. Cutter, "Mermaid", in which he discovered and surveyed the Brisbane River, 1823. (Both these papers were published in Barron Field's Geographical Memoirs of New South Wales.)

In 1821, at the suggestion of Barron Field (1), Doctor Douglas and Messrs. Oxley, Wallstonecraft, Berry, Goulburn and Irvine, made lists of the books they possessed in their private libraries. These were then entered into a central catalogue and the books became available to each member of the group. These books formed the first circulating library in the Colony. From this private circulating library of Oxley's friends, a public reading room and a public circulating library made its appearance five years later. This small beginning in its turn was the genesis of the National Library of New South Wales—the achievement of an environment that was to be fruitful in the world of aesthetic production.

Another organisation of which Sydney boasted in 1825, was the Linnaen Society, founded by Alex. Macleay, the Colonial Secretary and successor to Frederick Goulburn. Macleay's son—William, later on, became its president, and his unremitting labours kept the Society alive and active.

In addition to cultural societies, the theatre, church, music, philharmonic societies, concert halls, band music, and the presence in the land of famous singers, musicians, and elocutionists, indicated that in Sydney in the thirties and forties, aesthetic ideals were not unknown, and that many people were partial to the best in music, the loveliest in Church production and the humanism of work that with its magic touch

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(1) Journal of the Historical Society. (Mitchell Library).

(2) The Papers of the Philosophical Society. (The Mitchell Library).

ennobles the common things of life. The leaders of the various cultural groups were well aware that ideals move and rule the world.

The first real Sydney theatre was opened at the end of 1832, even though at that time the place was more of a country town, with the odour of gums, the pines and the breeze from the sea strikingly in evidence. The valleys around the developing metropolis gave it a rural feeling, while the "Tank Stream" through Hyde Park and Pitt Street indicated a country setting more than a city one.

In 1836 (1) two oratorios—"The Creation", and "The Messiah" were presented to the public in Sydney. A chorus of fifty singers from St. Mary's Cathedral, the Choral Association and the Philharmonic Society, helped to make the oratorios a great success, while some members of the 4th regiment—the King's Own Band, added something impressive to the orchestration.

In 1841 Isaac Nathan—the former musical historian to King George IV, arranged an evening of sacred music and song within St. Mary's Cathedral, and selections from Handel, Mozart, Haydn and the Compositions of Isaac Nathan, himself were rendered to a cultured and appreciative audience.

When W. V. Wallace arrived in Sydney in 1836, he composed "Maritana" in his home in Rowe Street. The Deane family arrived in Tasmania in 1836, and the head of that family had been a performer in the London Philharmonic Society. The Deane family soon left Tasmania to settle in Sydney, and in conjunction with W. V. Wallace, formed a string quartette that became famous for its artistic performances at many urban concerts. The Deanes for many years occupied a foremost position in the musical life of Australia. John Deane (senior) was responsible for the popularity of orchestral music and with Wallace as his supporter on the vocal side, Sydney of the thirties and forties had reason to be proud of its musical programmes.

Several musical conductors are alluded to in the cultural life of Sydney in the forties and fifties. The seraphine or harmonium was mostly heard with Church music; the flute was the musical instrument used to accompany singers, but no mention was ever made of the extensive use of the violin. Musical knowledge in Australia received an impetus by the arrival in Sydney of the famous Irish (2) soprano—Catherine Hayes, whose wonderful voice and perfect technique had obtained for her wide renown in Europe and America.

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(1) Vol. III, Page 169. (The Aust. Hist. Society).

(2) R.A.H. Records. Mitchell Library.

Catherine Hayes was followed in 1857 by another singer of world-wide repute—Anna Bishop, whose repertoire was composed of Italian arias and the best of British ballads. Other singers that followed and graced the Australian concert halls and made for them a standard of efficiency, and helped to establish aesthetic canons in the field of vocal art, were Mesdames Sarah Flower, Guerin, Bridson, while operatic artists like Madame Lucy Escott, Rosalie Durand, Georgina Hodson, Mrs. Banks, Madame Caradini, Henry Squires, Fred Lyster, Armes Beaumont and others played no small part in training the Australian people to appreciate the beautiful in song and in music generally. So much musical headway was made, and so many were interested in its development, that when Charles Santley, the greatest concert and oratorio baritone of his time visited Australia, the community is said to have matriculated in its musical course.

Although the first real theatre in Australia had its beginning in 1832, other theatres, too, had early foundations, e.g., The Theatre Royal was opened in Hobart in 1836; Wyatt built and opened the Victoria Theatre in Pitt St., Sydney, in 1838; but before these Mr. Barnett Levey had been granted a licence by Governor—Sir Richard Bourke, as early as 1829, to present dramatic performances. Levey owned the original Royal Hotel in George St., and he fitted up the saloon of the establishment as a theatre, where the first specimens of legitimate drama in the Colony were exhibited.

The Prince of Wales Theatre dated from 1855, but after a few years, it was destroyed by fire. On May 23rd, 1863, it was re-opened after being rebuilt, and was regarded as the handsomest, the most commodious, as well as the most complete in all its arrangements of any building of the kind in the colonies. (1) When it was opened, it presented to its audience the opera, "Martha" by Flotow. The principals were Madam Lucy Escott, Miss Georgina Hodson, Mr. Squires, Mr. Farquharson—names already alluded to and artists well-known in the musical world of the day.

For nine years people prominent in the histrionic world played their part on the stage of the Prince of Wales theatre, but it was again destroyed by fire in 1872. In 1875, it was rebuilt and reopened, but the name was changed to the Theatre Royal. One feature of this theatre was the use of chairs instead of sofas. In 1892 fire destroyed it once more, but it was rebuilt. In 1921 it passed into the hands of J. C. Williamson & Co.

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(1) R.A.H. Journal. (Mitchell Library).

In Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth, Hobart, as well as Sydney, ample evidence is available to show the dynamic existence of theatres, choral societies, mechanic institutes, literary groups, scientific circles, art galleries, etc.—all factors in the development of culture, all nurseries for the fostering and the training of the aesthetic judgment.

Australia has always favoured artistic achievements. From 1860, in all the States, branches of thought and culture flourished; painters, sculptors, musicians, architects, scientists, literary seers, etc., were numerous and renowned, while monuments of their work and exhibitions of their skill were by no means rare. From Arnes Beaumont, who was Australia's favourite tenor in 1861, and Catherine Hayes, "The Sweet Swan of Erin", who died in 1881, down to Ada Crossley, Australia's finest contralto, or Madame Melba, the world singer, and even to the leading artists of 1948, an Australian audience appreciates and patronises the best. The same holds true in all its artistic fields.

The establishment of churches and schools in early New South Wales were factors that paved the way to lead the people to noble ideals and to further aesthetic response. The churches sought to set before the minds of men a spiritual ideal, while the schools had for their objective culture and efficiency.

The first Church erected in Great Britain was constructed of wattle and daub; the first church built in Australia was also constructed of wattle and daub. In the year A.D. 56, St. Joseph of Aramathea, a leader among the early apostles, was sent to England, so the legend runs, by St. Phillip, and when he arrived at Glastonbury, he built a very small church of osiers and daub. On June 1st, 1793, a similar type of church in Australia was erected—it was the first effort made by the Church of England to make a foundation under Southern Skies.

Although the Churches in Australia had so humble a beginning, and the schools even a more restricted and a wretched economic field in which to operate, still when the Colony progressed, the churches increased, the schools became more numerous, their efficiency and adaptability to the needs of the community more marked, and before many years passed, churches and schools were found functioning in many places of the Mother Colony.

On Jan. 26th, 1830, Mr. Justice Francis Forbes laid the foundation stone of the Sydney College, afterwards known as the Sydney Grammar School. The Judge in his address used words that were prophetic. "I predict (1) with some confidence that the Sydney College will form for the Mother Country subjects prone to imitate her virtues, moral and social, that

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(1) Lady Forbes' Diary. (Mitchell Library).

they will display a characteristic loyalty to her literature, her glory and her justice, and that this school will be a cradle of good sons, so that it may shine forth in future annals, as one of the useful ornaments of a country."

Australia enjoyed at first a system of religious equality. A General Church Act was passed in 1836, the principles of the measure being that ministers of religion of any denomination should be entitled to salaries from the public treasury of from £100 to £200 annually, according to the numbers of their respective congregations. This system remained in operation until 1862. In 1836 the amount of money allotted to Education was £27,000, while in that year 30-40 schools were actively engaged in Education. In 1947, the amount allotted in Australia was £19,000,000 while the schools numbered 8214.

By degrees in the history of the Colonies other elements of progress emerged. Writers made a nervous beginning, poets put forth verses that were perhaps *vers libre*, but not much more; artists produced works that were considered good in their time, and today are of great historical interest; newspapers also appeared—the Sydney Gazette as early as 1803. Literary criticism at that early stage was not then necessary, nor had it been born, while aesthetics was purely a matter for the future.

Varied things, however, reflected the aesthetic trend in the developing colony. Mr. William Fisher (1) became the first nurseryman; as a horticulturist and lover of nature Henry Selkirk was held in high esteem. The untamed Australian forest and the grandeur of the lofty gum made a stronger appeal to him than the carefully trimmed park or the artificially arrayed garden. He loved the native plants and the cultivated flower, while the cross fertilisation of sparaxis, clivias and daffodils received his special attention. In life, Selkirk was one of nature's gentlemen—a man cultured, enlightened, inspiring—a dictator as regards taste and refinement; whatever he touched, wheresoever his interests led him, bore the aesthetic stamp.

Early Australia owes much to Captain John Macarthur, who had travelled through France and Switzerland studying the agricultural results of those countries, and in 1817, returned to Australia bringing with him some olive trees that he planted near Parramatta. In 1827 (2) the olive trees growing in the Sydney Botanical Gardens were worthy of inspection since after a six years' growth in Australian soil, they bore flowers,

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(1) Journal R.A.H. Society. (K. R. Cramp).

(2) The Sydney Gazette (1827).

while in Europe, ten to fourteen years generally elapsed before flowers appeared.

(Individuals who paved the way for the Australian Aesthetic.)

In addition to the names already recorded there were many people in New South Wales from 1830 onwards, who helped to direct the cultural outlook of the colony and to further its development, indirectly and directly, in the aesthetic field. Some showed their aesthetic trend in the erection of beautiful homes, others in the display of ornate gardens—planned and laid out with taste and discretion, while others again provided help in the educational, musical, social and the newly formed artistic circles of the developing colony.

Different country stations like "Bell-Trees" on the Hunter, and "Regentville" were objects of beauty as well as utility; larger homes in the South and West of the Colony built up traditions of wealth and great faith in the new land; eminent men and women among the early settlers gave Australia its first economic impetus, progressive and gifted governors helped to further its development; enthusiastic and cultured statesmen sought to secure for the colony self-government; men of business and commerce like Robert Campbell (the Father of Australian Commerce) or Simeon Lord, the first civil auctioneer in Australia assisted the great Southern Land in its economic fight for stability; men of adventure and initiative like Mitchell, Sturt, and Eyre, sought to ascertain what was beyond the known frontiers. All early Australians whether statesmen, legal luminaries, prominent ecclesiastics, and even successful business-men contributed their part in making Australia an ideal land, the home of democracy, the haven of culture and learning. Some of these—immigrants from other lands, others born under Austral skies, directed the destiny of their land; they fought for the privileges and rights, which the spirit of liberalism demanded, and they laboured unceasingly to save Australia from the drawbacks and troubles that characterised less favoured countries.

Many of the early Australians held an imposing place in big national transactions. The characters and careers of such men can be regarded in various lights; their interests were manifold; their activities were centred around the years of the Colony when materials with which they worked were inadequate, and limitations of time and insecurity, militated gravely against the success of their work in the industrial, social, cultural and aesthetic history of their land.

To these individuals a great debt is due, for it was their work, their foresight and their determination that secured



for their people a free press, Self-Government, public education, the free working of democratic institutions, the right of freedom, and the will to enjoy a full and rich life—all necessary prerequisites for the development of a country's aesthetic. Governor Arthur Phillip was the first man in Australia to visualise its future, and although the materials at his disposal were unsatisfactory, still he planned, arranged, directed and accomplished much more than was expected of him.

Among the other early Governors who helped in the development of the Colony in an especial manner were Lachlan Macquarie, who has been termed "The Building Governor"; Sir Thomas Brisbane, an astronomer, a scholarly man and a gentleman; Sir Richard Bourke, a noble soldier, and a polished man of extensive information and experience, one who in his younger days had come under the influence of the celebrated Edmund Burke; Sir George Gipps, a governor of unimpeachable naval character whose humanity benefitted the working gangs, the aborigines, and the landless; and who was one of the first in Australia to formulate an educational policy, and to steady its political helm when New South Wales was in the stage of transition.

To the list of the early governors could be added the names of men who adorned the legal profession; statesmen, who fought for political freedom; churchmen, who emphasised the dominancy of the eternal over the temporal; school-men who stressed the need of being prepared for the activities of life; businessmen who wished to make their country prosperous; governors' wives and women who were keenly interested in the spiritual, social and material welfare of their country.

Mrs. Macquarie wrote a letter in 1825-26 to the Rev. Wm. Cowper, Sydney, but it was not published in the Sydney Morning Herald until Sept. 22nd, 1868. That letter as a piece of literature deserves to live. It describes the death of her husband and the events that led to it, but the composition shows Mrs. Macquarie as a scholar, a literary artist, and a writer of considerable power, insight and erudition.

Among the individuals who helped the cultural development of early New South Wales and endeavoured to find an outlet for its growing aesthetic interest were W. T. Capes, who identified himself with the foundation of the Sydney Mechanic School of Arts, and whose interest in it continued for twenty years, and Major Thomas Mitchell who was the first president of the same School of Arts, when it was opened on March 22nd, 1833. Mitchell understood the cultural value of such institutes and he recognised the wonderful results that came from the co-operative instruction imparted therein. Under

his presidency the library contained 6,000 volumes. A third man was the Rev. J. D. Lang, a man of unusual capacity and energy, who for 55 years took a big part in the public life of New South Wales. "Like (1) a thread stout and stiff, that runs through the web, elaborating and fixing the pattern, Lang's personality was so prominent and his work so determining that the highest eulogy barely does him justice."

Dr. Lang can be summed up as a preacher, politician, journalist, organiser, immigrant agent, anthropologist, historian—he played many parts. For twenty five years he was a member of parliament; the vitality of his religion gave direction and drive to his politics. He was a fighter, unrelenting and vindictive in controversy; in championing good causes he made many enemies.

Lang (2) was in advance of his time in his fight for free institutions, free immigration and democratic ideals. He fought single-handed until he enlisted the aid of Henry Parkes in his fight against the wealthy and powerful group, who tried hard to keep New South Wales a convict settlement. Lang, however, saw in Sydney a growing city and spreading suburbs. He fought for the retention of beauty spots as playgrounds for the public, and to his efforts many places of charm along Sydney's harbour and sea coast were preserved. His work in founding grammar schools and scholarships; his zeal for extending the advantages of higher education to girls made him the pioneer of higher education in New South Wales.

When Dr. Lang in 1831 brought out "Mechanics" from Scotland in the Stirling Castle, a decided improvement in building and a superior type of architecture became noticeable. It is possible, too, that the Doctor played a leading part in securing religious equality for the colony, while he regarded education as purely a matter for Church concern.

A. C. Child maintains that Lang was too partial to his own Scotch countrymen, and that his bigotry coloured all he said and did, but as 4,000 to 10,000 steady and sturdy Scotchmen settled in Australia, as a result of his advocacy and propaganda, the Commonwealth today is deeply in his debt for his contribution to its present economic and educational position.

Among other prominent men were Stephen Marten Windeyer, the pioneer advocate of higher education; Francis Forbes, pre-eminent in legal leadership, the recipient of a knighthood in 1837, and perhaps one of the most cultured men of the thirties. Forbes was remarkable for his intellectual fervour, his common sense, his unfailing courtesy and his unusual philosophic serenity.

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(2) Journal R.A.H.S. (Vol. xxx. Page 221). (2) Page 247).

(1) Life of John Dunmore Lang. (Thomas Tait).

At Waterview House, Caroline St., Balmain, Nicol Drysdale Stenhouse from 1836-1873 held his aesthetic court, entertained his friends, carried on his literary activities, and gained by the most royal road known to humanity a liberal education for the fullest life. Stenhouse built up a magnificent library, and to it he invited people. Keeness for literature was the only pass-port needed for admission to his rooms; books became personal friends, and in his library over-looking the bay, disciples underwent a novitiate in literary and aesthetic criticism. Stenhouse was the princely companion to aspiring literary men, the kindly friend to Sydney's people, the genial alchemist who made the minds of others keen for knowledge; his monument was the appreciation of his country-men.

In the cultural history of New South Wales there are references to the home of D. H. Deniehy of Pitt St., whose house and library attracted groups of people eager to share books, participate in literary discussions and associate with all that is considered aesthetic in intellectual circles. To that home on sunny afternoons and bright happy nights, scholars, statesmen, and literati, gathered together as in the Salons of Paris, or in the Coffee-houses of London in Addison's time.

Deniehy was also one of the lecturers in the Sydney Mechanics Institute; he gave his first (1) lecture in its hall on Sept. 2, 1851, and his second one a week later. The Second lecture was considered a success judging by the crowd that filled the hall for the evening.

While some like Stenhouse and Deniehy contributed to the spiritual life of Australia in a quiet and unostentatious way, from 1825-1855 the personality that stands out foremost in the political, cultural and progressive life of the colony was W. C. Wentworth. He was a man of superb qualities, a great patriot; one who helped to build up the spiritual and material prosperity of his colony, and who was not afraid to traverse the restless ocean of a great nation's shifting and complex political beginning. Wentworth overshadowed his contemporaries, both in what he did for Australia, and in what he visualised the future of his country would be. According to H. M. Green, "Wentworth (2) had great achievements to his credit; he was a man of high ideals, but business-like in his activities, maintaining that in estimating political rights and requirements of a young country, attention should be paid to the existing situation, rather than to its past history. Through his language rolled the rhetoric of the 18th Century, and passages in his speeches possessed fine literary quality."

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(1) Social Sc. Review, Aug. 8th, 1863.

(2) R.A.H. Records. (Mitchell Library).

This great outstanding character in the history of New South Wales, according to K. R. Cramp, requires no orthodox monument, for many a noble construction reminds successive generations of his accomplishments. Wentworth was the great architect of the edifices of Australian political freedom and intellectual culture. The jury panel, the unfettered press, the unrestricted public meetings, the free speech of the legislator, the articulate force of a democrat, successfully asserting the dominance of popular will and the scholarship, public ability and enlightened outlook of the sons of Australian Universities—all these are his imperishable monuments.

Wentworth lived at Vacluse. The place is full of memories, but particularly sacred is the library now renamed the "Constitution Room." At the statesman's burial, Sir James Martin said (1) "We have no Westminster Abbey in which to place the bones of our illustrious dead; but here under the bright Australian sky and by the shores of the broad and blue Pacific, and in a corner of one of Nature's loveliest landscapes, we are about to lay his remains, where it was his own wish that they should repose . . ."

Wentworth throughout his long life was early Australia's great patriot and leader. In his thirties he gave himself up to parliamentary labours and its constant calls to action, but as a young man he was also a fearless, penetrating and vigorous writer. His book—"the History of the N.S.W. Early Settlement" was eagerly bought and soon ran through three editions. In his history, he anticipated many of the recommendations of Comr. Bigge, who was sent out to Australia to make investigations at the close of Macquarie's Governorship. The History, too, was an emphatic and logical plea for political and civic freedom for the Australian people.

Wentworth was an accomplished speaker and orator. As he grew older, practice and experience gave him confidence; elocutionary effects, classical quotations, and all the resources that rhetoric utilises and the devices that oratory commands were at his disposal. Demosthenes was his guide, Cicero was his model; the cultured elite of early Sydney enjoyed his eloquence. In his speeches phrases and clauses were delivered in perfect balance producing a sonorous and moving harmony and as a public speaker his reputation grew with the years (2) "I can truly say that the love of my country has been the master passion of my life. No man's heart has ever beat with a more ardent love of his country than mine, and it is on my native soil that I here stand. From boyhood up to manhood, I have watched over its infant growth, as a mother over her cradled

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(1) Speeches by W. C. Wentworth. Edit. E. R. Silvester. 1850, Page 15

(2) Journal R.A.H.S. (Oct. 18th. 1918).

child. Its welfare through life has been the object of my devoted love and affection, and now when my days are in the autumn of their cycle, that welfare is the object of my highest hopes and most hallowed aspirations."

Wentworth directly and indirectly helped to provide the ways and means by which the Continent enjoyed those cultural facilities that enabled it to develop so rapidly and so maturely in the political, literary and aesthetic fields.

Wentworth, democratic in most things was by temperament and outlook essentially aristocratic. He believed that the station owning families should have ascendancy, that they must be the educated men, and that they should be fitted for the high offices of the State. Speaking of the University he founded he said: "If it results in no higher achievement than the preparation of the youth of the Colony for the various departments of the Government, the money it may cost, will be well spent." Wentworth saw only the political end in all that he wrote, and about which he spoke, he appeared to know little of the artist's delight in labouring for a result. It is possible, too, that his speeches, brilliant at times because of the circumstances responsible for their utterance, failed to reach beyond the purpose of the moment, and hence are not now perused by scholars as the immortal speeches of great men.

John Macarthur who brought the Golden Fleece to Australia was a man whose life was an inspiration for his contemporaries to do great things. He was not a quarrelsome, ill-tempered fellow, as some alleged, but one who was a thinker, and he felt that to make his adopted land famous, it must produce something that the rest of the world greatly needed. He called his cow-pastures "Camden", after Lord Camden. His wife, née Elizabeth Veale, was a wonderful lady and a great scholar. In 1822 John was awarded two medals by the Society of Arts in London—one for having exported 150,000 pounds of fine wool to England and the other for having brought the quality of his wool up to the standard of the finest Saxon merino. Macarthur died in 1834 at the age of sixty seven.

Greenway was a man of artistic ideals. He regarded Sydney as the beginning of a great city, and the Colony as a nation in its infancy. His ambition (1) was to plant the skeleton of the future city so that at a later date it would equal in beauty, and surpass in grandeur, the principal cities of Europe. He foresaw flanked by imposing buildings a mighty bridge of the future, linking the cities on the North and South shores of Sydney harbour. Greenway was Australia's first outstanding socialist, and its first great artist. According to Hardy Wilson, he was the most accomplished architect, that ever lived in Australia.

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(1) Journal R.A.H.S., Vol. XVI (1930) Article by Prof. G. A. Wood.

David Collins—the most careful of Australia's earliest historians,—gave a well-written pictorial and interesting account of the first ten years of the settlement during the time he was Judge Advocate and secretary to the Governor. Eris O'Brien (2) notes that early Australian historical matter has been not only prolific but in many instances characterised by research. "The Centuries hence will regard Collins and Tench with a little of that awe, with which Britishers now invest the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles and the work of the Venerable Bede."

Perhaps one of the greatest men that Australia is deeply indebted to is Thomas Sutcliffe Mort—a national benefactor. He took a keen interest in the development of primary industries in his Colony. In 1847 he became a member of the Society for the promotion of the Fine Arts. When he paid a visit to Europe he collected paintings, bronzes and statues and sent them out to New South Wales, to be of interest and education to his fellow-country-men. He promoted by financial help and judicious advice a popular education and in 1871 was elected the first president of the N.S.W. Academy of Art—an institution that had just come into existence. Not only did he play an important part in the development of the Port of Sydney, but he was also a useful economist. He initiated the earliest system of profit-sharing. He floated his works at Balmain into a company in 1873, and the foremen of his works became shareholders. "I as (1) a capitalist and you as workers should be bound together with the cords of common interest."

Alexander McLeay—the first legislative "speaker," in Australian History when he was 77 years old, was an enthusiastic entomologist and ornithologist. He converted his grant of 54 acres at Elizabeth Bay into a botanical paradise. From 1825-1836, he was Colonial Secretary. After seven years in retirement, he emerged to seek successfully the election which placed him in the Legislative Council and the Speaker's Chair, but in 1846 he retired from Public life.

In Pitt Street a small toy shop, where wood and bone and ivory turning were done by a man named Henry Parkes was always an object of attraction to boys and passers-by. Mrs. Parkes (No. 1) served in the shop, while the aspiring statesman and poet stood at his lathe, turning his ivory. In reality he was thinking out matter for his future speeches, or gathering mentally materials for the sonnets and poems of his book—"Murmurs of the Stream" inspired by the music of the rippling waters of the Tank stream close by. Later on,

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(1) His Speech on the Occasion.

(2) The Foundation of Australia. (Eris O'Brien).

he left his lathe and made for the shade of the old trees in Bridge Street, where he made speeches against Transportation, and with Dr. Lang and others, became prominent in politics. He was elected to a seat in the Legislative Council in opposition to Mr. Charles Kemp. After his entry into parliament he began his paper "The Empire."

#### EARLY AUSTRALIAN NEWSPAPERS.

While there were also many things to mark the Australian aesthetic beginning that space and time will not allow to be included in this contribution, still a reference to the Press must not be overlooked. The Sydney Gazette from 1803 supplied whatever news was available in the early history of the Colony, but since it was under Government control, it provided no political information; comment was absent, censorship was active, the reader was nourished with the news convenient for him. The printer had to bear the whole burden and cost of each production; the supply of paper was often a problem; the circulation was somewhat scanty, some 300 subscribers bought the first issue of the 1/- weekly gazette.

The Sydney Morning Herald began its long life in April, 1831. Wm. McGarvie, Ward Stephens and F. M. Stokes represented the three men who were responsible for its publication. Later on Stokes and Ward bought out McGarvie. In 1838 John Fairfax and his family arrived in Sydney, and in three years time Kemp and Fairfax became the owners of the paper, but in 1853 John Fairfax remained the sole proprietor.

In Western Australia in 1833 the Perth Gazette made its weekly appearance. In the other colonies newspapers appeared—some enjoyed a short and exciting life; others again, like the Sydney Morning Herald, burst into flower as the colonies developed and flourished, and the papers became the organs of daily and useful information, the reflex of the country's progress and prosperity. The papers, too, were the moulders of public opinion; they were often the instruments to voice the feelings of the people on matters of political, religious, social and economic moment, and the barometer that indicated unquestionably the cultural standard of the people of the country.

From 1831, the date of Governor Darling's departure, the freedom of the press was assured, and from that moment the newspapers emerged to the greater and nobler freedom of the 19th Century. The freedom the press enjoyed enabled it to steady at times the political helm, to castigate the nation's leaders, politically and socially, when necessary; to report faithfully the trend of events and to keep its readers conversant

with matters of world information. A good paper views movements in other lands with impartial eyes; it builds up a patriotic spirit in its own home land, and finally it furnishes those incidents and elaborates those means that bring about by means of literature, art, morals and aesthetic experience, an aristocracy of the spirit—the only aristocracy in the world worth having.

### THE JEWISH CONTRIBUTION.

Australia is indebted, in the main, to the British Isles for its wonderful early development, but people from other lands and from other countries helped also in the upbuilding. The Jews, contributing their part, did not submerge their religious identity in the melting pot of the new colony, but, on the contrary, they harmonised outstanding service to their country with fearless devotion to their religious institutions—a feature which since those early days has remained a characteristic of Australian Jewry.

A York Street Synagogue had its foundation stone laid on April 19, 1842, and in the year 1844, the opening took place. It was out of the York Street congregation that the senior Synagogue of Australia grew.

The first Sydney University (1) benefaction was due to a fund bequeathed by the will of a Jew—Solomon Levey. In 1835, he left £500 to the Sydney College. The money accumulated, and by an Act of Parliament, it was transferred to the University.

Up to 1878, the benefaction provided a prize for general efficiency in the Matriculation Examination; after that date it was awarded for proficiency in Physics and Chemistry.

Percy Joseph Marks (2) was deeply interested in Australia's communal progress. He made a specialty of collecting Australian judaica. His library became a storehouse of valuable references all pertaining to the land of his adoption. On Jewish statistics and history, he was the accredited authority. He forwarded Australiana and important literary matters to the Hebrew University at Jerusalem where a large collection is recorded in his name.

### MINOR CONTRIBUTIONS.

Two references to visitors to early Australia are here given to show that culture was not unknown. A French lady writes:—  
(1) "Mrs. Field was a woman of charming disposition, very well

(1) Sydney Herald, November 2, 1835.

(2) Journal of Australian Jewry, Historical Section, Page 233.



read and quite at home with French literature. She was exceedingly pretty and possessed a most ravishing foot. I was sad when I left her. The sorrow I experienced when leaving Sydney, where I had been so well received was not diminished by the knowledge that this was the starting point of our homeward journey." It might be added that Governor Macquarie presented the travellers with a cow, a calf, and a dozen fine sheep, while John McArthur gave them two of his merinos and an emu.

This illustration of the presence of culture in the early Australian community is in keeping with the contribution of a literary man—a scholar and traveller, Strzlecki, who is credited as being the first to discover gold in Australia. He records in his Journal, April 1839, the following particulars of Sydney.

"Since my arrival in Sydney I cannot cease asking myself, am I really in the capital of that "Botany Bay," which has been represented as "The Community of Felons," as the most demoralised colony known in the history of Nations . . .?"

"I find in the streets of Sydney a decency and a quiet which I have never witnessed in any other of the ports of the writer's kingdom. No drunkenness, no sailors' quarrels, no appearance of prostitution were to be seen. George Street, the Regent Street of Sydney, displayed houses and shops modelled after the fashion of those in London. At ten o'clock the streets are deserted; to the bustling industry of the day succeeds a happy repose. The hardy nature of the Anglo-Saxon is proof against the effects of transport. It does not depend on the soil, either for its character or on its nationality: the Anglo-Saxon reproduces his country wherever he hoists his country's flag."

The men who built up Australia were sturdy men of courage and character. A national homogeneity characterised the first settlers, probably helped to a degree by the French Revolution, for its political and social convulsion (1789-1815) shattered her monarchy and paralysed her colonial aspirations. Governor Macquarie continually used the word Australian, and its use, even as early as 1815, tended to make the early inhabitants conscious of their potential influence. The first builders may have had material ends in view, but a democratic spirit stimulated their activities and gave them a unifying force—all serviceable in making a final impression on the national character. J. W. Lewin, who, in 1801, sailed with Lt. Grant to Western Port, and although for a time not quite a free man, left to posterity a rich legacy of his paintings of old Sydney, of which some excellent examples can be seen in

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(1) Journal of Madame Rose de Freycinet translated by Sir Wm. Dixon.

the Mitchell Library. Others, too, have left legacies in other fields, but notwithstanding the drawbacks of the time, and the unfavourable circumstances of the colony's existence up to 1851, remarkable achievements are recorded. It would seem that many of the men and women of the time were somewhat like John Oxley, one of the foremost explorers, pioneers and public men of his day, who expressed his life's ambition thus:—"It (1) is my dearest hope that I may not perish undistinguished in the crowd."

The names alluded to in this chapter represent but a very small number of eminent individuals in New South Wales. Victoria had its great men, so had Queensland, South and West Australia, while Tasmania during the Governorship of Sir John Franklin essayed to become the Australian cultural centre. When a country possesses a number of exceptional men it makes the country great—the social tone is raised, its literary prestige is enhanced, the cultural role ranks high, the aesthetic capacity, as a consequence, finds the best opportunity to manifest itself.

If each incident or the work of the individuals in this chapter does not quite represent the aesthetic phase, the explanation offered is that the incidents, the events, and the machinery set in motion were the instruments available, the means by which, with wise and judicious use, the aesthetic was in the course of projection, the ground work being prepared with care, upon which an aesthetic superstructure was to be erected. Materials of a transient or personal nature, if not recorded, are soon lost, and matters of this sort often serve as the indispensable pre-requisite of the more general synthesised history and records of the social and philosophical interpretation of a country; and this fact applies particularly to Australia—the country under consideration.

**Note:** John McArthur spelt his name as McArthur. Most writers style him Macarthur. I have used both ways. (Mitchell Library.) W. C. Wentworth's History was "The Statistical, Historical and Political Description of New South Wales and its dependent Settlements in Van Dieman's Land (London, 1819-1820)."

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(1) Mr. Felton Mathew's Diary. (Mitchell Library).

CHAPTER FOUR.

**THE CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS TO A NATION'S AESTHETIC.  
INTRODUCTION.**

In this chapter the consideration of those factors that facilitated the development of the Australian aesthetic will receive attention, for their functioning satisfactorily paved the way and prepared the national material to make the aesthetic possible, seeking for its responses, searching for its ideals, enjoying its pleasures and endeavouring to discover whether the work of an artist belonged to the timeless, or whether the veil between the temporal and the eternal of another's work was very thin, or finally how the spiritual vision of one differs from another in its extent. Although the poverty of preparatory works in the Australian aesthetic arena has been a distinct draw-back to a full investigation of its content, still the examination of these contributory factors will help to show the ways and means that facilitated its development, that the aesthetic holds an exalted position in the Australian mind, and that philosophy (1) does not aim at mere interesting results, but the systematic organisation of facts.

Often too, an analysis of the past determines the position of the present, and indicates what may be expected in the future. The factors for consideration are the political, the economic, the sociological, the psychological, the philosophical and the personal contributions of the Australian citizens from the year 1788 to the present year, 1949.

**THE POLITICAL CONTRIBUTION.**

The political issue in a country must be considered in estimating the advancement of its culture and the development of its aesthetic. From 1788 to 1823, when the Governor was supreme, and his autocratic power dominated the early Sydney community, the major part of which was under military control and barrack regime, culture except in a few instances was almost negligible, and the aesthetic practically non-existent. Culture thrives in freedom; the aesthetic finds its expression in social development, community co-operation, and favourable political outlook.

In 1823 (2), when the New South Wales Judicature Act set up a Legislative Council of 5-7 members, the first discontinuance of autocracy and the glimmer of the dawn of constitutional government were noted. In 1828, and 1842, further forward steps

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(1) The Nature and Criterion of Truth. (J. C. Creighton, P. Review XV4, P. 593).

(2) Short History of Australia. (E. Scott).

brought about the rule of the people. In 1851, self-government was secured; by 1855, full representative Government operated in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

Who were the first men in New South Wales to begin the agitation for self-government is not easy to decide, although many would credit W.C. Wentworth with the first movement, but Dr. Wm. Bland, born 1789, later the secretary of the Australian Patriotic Association, and a man keenly interested in the destinies of his adopted country merits serious consideration. (1) In 1839, he published a brochure said to be the first public and bold expression of the opinion, "that the people of New South Wales had a right to govern themselves." Bland became a member of the Legislative Council in 1858, but he was always regarded as a vigorous and generous partisan of the cause of freedom. In particular, he was a patron, an advocate and a zealous fighter for the betterment of education—a policy to ensure freedom and to make the people a community interested in their own development.

The Australian people in the thirties and early forties, realised that there would be no advancement—political, social, cultural or otherwise, while convicts at the rate of 2,000 a year poured into the country, and during that period material efforts were made to bring about the end of transportation. The Australian (2) Patriotic Association under the presidency of Sir John Jamison fought with vigour particularly in 1844 to secure the success of its liberal platform, and that association, plus the fiery speeches by Robert Lowe, the Rev. J. D. Lang, and the public opinion of free settlers and others, succeeded in their efforts, for by 1848 transportation to the East of Australia ceased, and Australia became free. "No longer did the Colonies exist primarily for the benefit of the Mother-country, with their own wishes and interests subservient to statesmen beyond the seas."

The year 1851, marked the beginning of self-government and the Australian statesmen of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania began to build up a system of constitutional government that was to be liberal and progressive; they wished the colonies to control their own destinies and to become the great countries of the S.E. Pacific.

No sooner had Self-government begun to function in the colonies, and they were free to work out their own political destinies, than the influence of the Chartists was felt. Many of those who had immigrated to Australia in the gold-digging era were English Chartists, or men imbued with the political ideas of the Chartists, and they soon realised that the reform they

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(1) Journal A.R.H.S. (Vol. XI, Page 329).

(2) Vol. XVI. (Page 329) R.A.H.S.

advocated and the parliamentary principles they upheld, would be adopted and enacted in Australia before they were embodied in legislative shape in Great Britain.

By degrees the ideals of the Chartists with one exception—annual parliaments, were introduced into the different colonies and by 1875, the Australian colonies enjoyed not only political autonomy, but politically, socially and economically could be considered as highly developed. Australia even made an advance on the six demands of the Chartists, for in 1894, South Australia conferred the franchise on women—a policy soon followed by the other colonies. Further political reforms were made and social legislation was introduced from time to time, so that in many respects Australia came to be considered as the world's political and social laboratory.

The influence of Chartism in Australia was potent and enduring. The influx into the continent of a large body of active intelligent and enterprising men during the critical years of the Australian development helped to determine to a considerable degree its social and political outlook. The sublime faith in democratic methods, belief in small holdings, trust in public education as a means of social salvation, the popular tendency to rely upon State activity—all these contributed in no small way to determine the character of its people.

The discovery of gold in 1851 gave a decided impetus to the favourable economic position Victoria and New South Wales enjoyed. The search for gold and the influx of thousands of fortune-seekers lasted for five or six years, but when the alluvial deposits in the country became exhausted, and the prospecting for the golden gleam lost its glamour, the miners turned to something more stable. When the land was opened up and the development of agriculture became the aim of many, a great economic improvement was the result, and the years 1860-1880 could be regarded as the prosperous years in all the Australian colonies.

The aim of the Governments once the era of responsible government began was the idea of settling the yeomanry in the land. John Robertson's "Free selection before survey" policy in New South Wales, Charles Gavan Duffy's "Land Act" in Victoria in 1862, "The Homestead's Act" of Queensland, "The Torrens Act" in South Australia, and later land acts in the Colonies, all aimed at settling people on the land and securing for that purpose a constant stream of immigrant settlers—men and women from the peasantry and farming class, but from the beginning a filtering care in the character of immigration was discerned. Legislation excluded Chinese immigrants; South Australia refused convicts

from the beginning; and the first Legislative Council of Victoria passed very stringent acts against the incursion of expirees and ticket-of-leave men from Tasmania.

Many members of the parliaments in the different colonies worked hard to benefit their fellow-men and to secure the adoption of a wise liberal platform. Some of these men fought for the freedom of the press and the cause of free institutions; others laboured in the field of education; others again in the social sphere, while finally several made their voices heard and their presence felt in securing wise legislation for the landless, and in breaking up the great squatting properties held by men, who believed in the power of the cattle and sheep magnates. In addition to names already mentioned, George Robert Nichols, admitted to the bar, July 1st, 1833 in the Supreme Court of New South Wales, and believed to be the first Australian member of the legal fraternity, was when he became a member of parliament, a great political influence in securing better conditions for his people.

In another sphere Robert Lowe (1842-1850) worked enthusiastically for reforms—political, social, and educational. Mrs. Caroline Chisholm harboured the helpless women who had migrated to Australia, and with the aid of parliamentary legislation, she succeeded in placing ten to fourteen thousand girls in employment, and in many respects acted as guardian, directress and protectress to other girls, until they were married, or satisfactorily placed. Names like John Robertson, Henry Parkes, David Syme, Graham Berry, James Service, Hugh Childers, Wilberforce Stephen, Charles Cowper, Charles Gavan Duffy, Alexander Peacock, and many others, are associated with movements either for reform, or for securing better conditions and economic opportunities for the ordinary men and women of the two rapidly developing colonies—Victoria and New South Wales.

When the Australian colonies secured political economy (1851-1855) they developed under their respective governments, constructive social legislation was secured, depressions and land booms were dealt with when felt, railways were built as the need arose, and progress and prosperity characterised the continent. Australian democracy regarded the state as a vast public utility, each citizen claimed the right to work, and the justice of enjoying a fair and reasonable living. The sentiment of justice, the claim of rights, the conception of equality and the appeal to Government, as the instrument of self-realisation was the prevailing ideology of Australian democracy.

In (1) the nineties the Commonwealth ceased to be a shadowy exciting aspiration and began to take shape as a practical de-

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(1) Australia. (Hancock).

sign. After much controversy and several referenda, the Colonies agreed to federate and the Federation of the Australian States in 1900, became recognised as the greatest political event in its history.

The opening of the first Federal Parliament took place in 1901. From that date the word "Australia" superseded the phrase "The Colonies", and each colony of the Commonwealth became known as a "State". From that time also, the people considered themselves as belonging to a nation; legislation functioned as applicable to the Commonwealth; the lines of policy laid down were meant to bear an influence on Australia for many years to come.

With the advent of the Commonwealth Parliament the machinery of Government was devised to make its working efficient; a Commonwealth railway was constructed to connect the East with the West; methods of defence were adopted; a military college was set up; a naval college was established; Australia began to build a navy of its own; conferences took place between the Dominions and the Mother Country to strengthen the ties that existed, and Australia in many ways set out to play a part in Imperial affairs on the wider field of world politics.

The political situation of a country aids or assists the development of its aesthetic. In a country like Australia, the spirit of which is democratic, and the outlook practical, freedom prevails, education is a matter of public concern, the social system favours equality, criticism receives little restriction, and generous encouragement awaits those who wish to raise the spiritual standard to higher levels. When (1) the difficult activity of the spirit has been recognised as the crown and flower of noble living; when a Country is at peace politically, and enjoys economic prosperity; when the social conditions of the people are satisfactory, art receives consideration, and Art (2) according to P. Dearmer is the expression of spiritual values in terms of beauty.

The art of a community manifests itself in various ways—the fine arts, literature, architecture, music, sculpture, etc., and when art is developed, the aesthetic receives consideration. At first the aesthetic experience may not be more than what an ordinary man of culture and insight enjoys; the aesthetic act itself, the pleasure in the work of art—the contemplation, is reserved for a later period of development. The fairer flowers and fruits associated with aestheticism grow slowly—time, train-

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(1) The Privilege of Age. (Vida D. Scudder).

(2) Art and Religion. (P. Dearmer).

ing, discipline, theorising, criticism, comparisons, etc., are the things that the genuinely complete aesthetic, the integral philosophy of the beautiful need to reach felicity.

### THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION.

For a country to develop socially, educationally, culturally, and to be the possessor of an aesthetic ideal, its economic development needs consideration. If a country possesses wealth, if its people are energetic, its commerce in a flourishing condition, its markets many and varied, and if the natural resources of the land are utilised to the full, then it may be expected that spiritual advancement is possible in that country, and that all movements of a cultural and an aesthetic nature will find a ready and suitable soil in which to grow and develop to a rich maturity.

Australia, from the date of its political foundation, has enjoyed many privileges: its pastures provided the means for growing wool; its climate has been favourable to agriculture; its minerals are varied and rich; its industries—primary and secondary, have played a considerable part in the national economy. while the discovery of gold in 1851—the *Annus Mirabilis*, attracted the attention of the world.

Australia is British in origin, Australian in its growth, Pacific-minded in its future. The people are democratic in their outlook, socially inclined in their philosophy, steadfast in their friendships, loyal and faithful to their fatherland.

The one outstanding feature of the Settlement which began in 1788, was its extraordinary rapid growth. James Ruse (1) claimed that he was the first man to set his foot on the mainland carrying (Governor) Hunter ashore; that he was the first to sow the grain and the first to get a land grant (Dec. 24th, 1794) in the New world. It is also maintained that Ruse made the first plough in New South Wales.

The agriculture begun by Ruse, and the sheep introduced by Macarthur represented the beginnings of the Australian economy. Macarthur's sheep consisted of Bengal and Irish ewes, and of famous merinos—some from Saxony, some from the flock of George III, and some from Spain.

Material (1) prosperity characterised early Australia from the year 1791. The Settlement was only three years old, when vessels put out from Port Jackson on whaling and sealing ventures. Bass Strait was the first great sealing ground. In 1802, there were 200 men employed in the various sealing gangs in that strait. When no one had penetrated more than 50 miles inland, the whalers, sealers, and sandalwood traders of Sydney,

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(1) Journal of R.A.H.S. Vol. XXV.



Hobart Town and Launceston, had explored and exploited the vast recesses of the Southern Ocean. Before 1813, when the Blue Mountains were crossed, schooners or open boats had found their way to every rock and island in Bass Strait. The early export trade and prosperity of Sydney and of Hobart Town were built up on blubber, seal-skins, whale-bone and other sea spoil. As late as 1833, the products of the whale-fishery formed half the total exports of New South Wales.

American vessels and whalemens adventurers often visited the coast of New South Wales from 1800 onwards, and the stories these adventurers told of the sealers that were marooned, and of the island discoveries that were made brought an element of romance into the early life of the new settlement. When (1) the American brigs "Fanny," "The Union," "General Boyd," etc., visited Australian waters in 1802 and 1803, Governor King viewed the matter with alarm, as the vessels were instrumental in helping convicts to escape, and in persuading colonial men to join their ranks.

Events that favoured the early economic development of the colonial settlement were the foundation of the Royal Agricultural Society, July 5th, 1822. Sir Thomas Brisbane was the patron, while Sir John Jamison became the first president. Stock-raising, manufactures, wool-growing, agriculture, fruit growing, etc., were some of the things that helped the development of the colony. John Blaxland was the founder of the cattle industry which he endeavoured to place on a sound footing. Blaxland did for the cattle what Macarthur did for the sheep; he also led the way in the manufacture of salt, while Gregory, his brother, was the real founder of the wine industry.

The "small (2) miserable hut" in which Mrs. Macarthur entertained Governor Macquarie shortly before he sailed for England in 1822, was the home which began an industry that changed a convict colony into the land of the golden fleece. By 1826, John Macarthur's wool had made New South Wales famous, and the excellence of the merino export succeeded in capturing the English market.

The Australian (3) wool was longer, softer, silkier, and more resilient, than any but the very best Saxon wool. In 1826, over 1,000,000 lbs. were sent to the English market, in 1839 ten million lbs. were forwarded, but in 1845 the export rose to twenty four million lbs. "Put everything on four feet" they cried out in a kind of ecstasy. English capital helped, seasons were good, stock and wool prices soared. Men spoke of sheep, dreamed of sheep,

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(1) Journal R.A.H.S. (Vol. XXIX).

(2) The Journal R.A.H.S. ((Vol. XI).

(3) Journal R.A.H.S. (Vol. XI).

they lived in an atmosphere of sheep. In 1850, Australia sent 137,177 bales of wool to Germany, for Australia had captured the German market also. If Virginia found its staple in tobacco, Australia found it in wool.

Wool was not the only great product that raised the economic value of the continent, but stock, wheat, wine, sandalwood, salt, etc., and after 1851 an output of gold which was valued at £600,000,000 and more before Federation, according to reliable authority (1). Other minerals were discovered in different parts of Australia but Newcastle coal, iron, steel, and brown coal found in different parts have all contributed largely to Australia's economic value.

The following indicates the growth of an industry in New South Wales about 1833: "On (2) returning we passed close by Sir John Jamison's large vineyard at Regentville—laid out with much taste into terraces on the sides of the hills and surrounded by hedges of the China rose and lemon. Some of the vines are on trellises, others are only trained up a single pole, all have a very beautiful appearance. Many persons expect the country will become as famous for the production of wine as Madeira, or the wine producing countries of Europe. It is certain that the wines of almost every description flourish and bear most luxuriantly on dry and rocky lands, where nothing else could grow." Felton Mathew was a surveyor in the colony of N.S.W. in 1829, and his wife often accompanied him in his surveys.

As New South Wales advanced in prosperity, new buildings were erected and magnificent homes adorned the city and countryside. In 1832, "Newington House" (3) was built and there John Blaxland entertained lavishly. Major A. C. Innes built a big home seven miles from Port Macquarie. He was the chief mover in "The Patriotic Association", and as he was a man of great personal magnetism, as well as of wealth, he endowed the young colony with a glamour that was most favourable to immigration. Other famous homes like "Vaucluse", "Coomfing" (Bathurst), "The White House," "Waverley House," "Henrietta Villa," were among the number that added lustre to the locality and gave an indication of future greatness.

In Victoria, the Hentys (The pilgrim fathers of Victoria) made a settlement at Portland in 1834. When Melbourne was founded in 1835, cultural centres were noted before the first decade was reached. Redmond Barry, Governor La Trobe, Dr.

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(1) Short History of Australia. (E. Scott).

(1) Mrs. Felton Mathew's Journal, Dec. 2nd, 1833. (Kept in Comth. Nat. Library, Canberra, 1938).

(3) Journal R.A.H.S. (Vol. XVII).

G. Howitt were among those who gave attention to the spiritual development of the Colony. In Tasmania, Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland similar progress was remarked.

The discovery of gold in 1851 brought a vivifying influx of vigorous settlers, a wholesome element to leaven the community, and effectively neutralised the waning effects of the old convict system. There arose in the people a new spirit of enterprise and abounding energy. The poet Bracken describes the position:—

“No other land has mustered such a gallant race of men,  
As that brave golden legion on the march to fortune then.”

After the discovery of gold the capital cities developed in a remarkable way. It was gold that made Melbourne; wool gave Sydney its impetus, Adelaide depended more on agriculture, while Brisbane, Perth and Hobart owed their development to several causes.

On July 3rd, 1850 (1), the soft sod of the first Australian railway—Sydney to Parramatta was turned at Redfern by the Hon. Mrs. Keith Stuart, daughter of the then Governor—Sir Charles Fitzroy, but it was not until Sept. 26th, 1855, that the first train left Redfern Station for Parramatta Junction (14 miles). The Governor-General, Sir William Denison travelled in the first carriage. The journey took 45 minutes to accomplish and about 3,000 people travelled on the new railway on the opening day.

The Governor at the luncheon insisted that the colony must have a network of railways, by which every part of the country could be connected. The Sydney Morning Herald described the event as a triumph, not only of science over natural difficulties, but of the spirit of enlightenment and civilisation over prejudice and worldly-mindedness. In its leading article of the same day, it expressed a fear that some people would not be able to view travelling at such speeds with too much confidence and composure.

The railways brought about greater social mobility by breaking down the isolation of the country parts, and encouraging adults to travel to distant places, even to send their children to the secondary schools in the cities. Opportunities for the marketing of perishable produce and the tapping of fresh circles of consumers were also a valuable economic contribution that the railways gave. (2) They really ushered in a revolution in outlook—people began to believe in the possibility of an almost infinite improvement in material welfare.

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(1) Journal R.A.H.S. (Vol XXII, Page 34).

(2) The Future of Economic Society. (Roy Glenday).

Victoria took the lead in introducing the electric telegraph, the first line being the one erected between Melbourne and Williamstown opened Feb., 1854, followed by one between Williamstown and Geelong (1854).

The growth of trade and the development of industry have been remarkable in Australia. In the early (1) stages of its existence the Home Government failed to send out adequate supplies; the officers of the Settlement after 1792 began a policy of land-grabbing; the promotion of a monopoly through a hateful rum-currency nearly brought the settlement to destruction; the peculiar conditions of the supply of labour, the lack of the incentive of self-interest, the drawbacks that checked the development of the first agricultural attempts, the official opposition, etc., all failed to stop its onward movement to progress. Macquarie developed trade and production, individuals—men like Icely (Bathurst) Mort, Wentworth, Sempill, Leslie, Cox, Berry, Wollstonecraft and many others helped to build up Australia's economic prosperity. Some developed its agriculture, others its pastoral industries, others its manufactures, others again its lines of communications. Great men like W. J. Farrar added enormously to the wealth of Australia by means of his leadership in the frontier of wheat culture, breeding pedigree wheats adaptable to the endless variety of Australian agricultural climates.

Science, too, played a big part in the better production of stock, cereals, fruits, food, manufactures, etc., with the result, that Australia today possesses splendid farms and mines, big stock stations and networks of railways, telegraphs, airways, motor-coaches. She has at her disposal materials that will make her one of the great countries of the world. In 1948, the wool cheque alone was worth £150,000,000. Industries—primary and secondary make Australia prosperous. It was due to its prosperity that so many public institutions were set up, that the philosophy of public education was begun as early as 1872 in Victoria, that secondary and technical education at a later date were established in all States. Governor Sir George Bowen, one one occasion, in one of his addresses (1878) drew attention to the commercial capacity of Victoria—a small State only 43 years old, yet it possessed more trade than some of the European countries hundreds of years older.

The events that followed the discovery of gold formed a splendid foundation for the growth of nationhood and a growing pride in the development and progress of the continent. Mutual interest and common destiny gave an impulse to the national spirit and a strong desire to replace parochialism with the idea

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(1) Journal R.A.H.S., Vol III. (Meredith Atkinson).

of a movement towards Federation. Her later development, the participation in the Boer War, the big part played in the Great War (1914-1918), and the supreme effort made in the recent war (1939-1945) when the very existence of the country was threatened, all helped to make Australia the nation she is at present.

"A White Australia" (1) is the policy adopted to preserve Australia's national life; it prevents the permanent residence of peoples, whose standard of life—social, political, and economic, at present differ from that of the Australian. The policy was formed during the second half of the 19th century and from 1890-1900 the policy became complete. The ideas underlying the policy of the Restriction Bill of 1888, said Sir Henry Parkes, are these:—"We should not encourage or admit amongst us any class of persons whatever, whom we are not prepared to advance to all our franchise, to all our privileges as citizens and, to all our social rights, including the right of marriage; that no class of persons should be admitted as far as we can reasonably exclude them, who cannot take up our rights."

Australia advanced economically in all its departments up to the time of Federation. In 1901, political unification was achieved, and the Australian Commonwealth began to play its part as a Dominion in the British Empire. The Statute of Westminster still further improved her position. Today, the Commonwealth looms large as a great democratic country; with people (2) happy and progressive, with centres for the expansion and elevation of education and culture, and with the means of enjoying the spiritual as well as the material things of life.

The prosperity of Australia enabled a liberal supply of newspapers to be printed, art galleries to be erected, libraries to be founded, schools and universities to be established at a time when the population was comparatively small, when little was known of the men and women who made up its numerical strength, and at a period when it was commonly thought that the Australian was too absorbed in material problems to bother about the immaterial, or too occupied in the race for the prizes of life to heed the call of the spiritual.

When the economic side of a country is satisfactory and the sociological outlook healthy, the educational phase receives attention, and men and women, old and young become incorporated in its forward movements. Dickens, Morris, Matthew Arnold, Mrs. Gaskell and Charles Kingsley protested from different points of view against the inhumanity and barbarism

(1) Says Myra Willard. Journal R.A.H.S., Vol. VIII.

(2) Sociolog. (W. Willigan).

of making economic efficiency the sole measure of social progress in a country. The best things in human life, they maintained, are not those in which one man's gain is another's loss. Socialism and communism belong to the same circle of ideas as acquisitive capital; both regard the possession of money and the things which money can buy as the supreme good.

M. de Tocqueville (1) contended, speaking of America, that democratic nations are likely to care too much for mere material prosperity. Had he visited Australia, the same contention may have been his, but although commerce, industry, manufactures, and economic progress represent to a great extent the Australian goal of attainment, culture and the development of those elements which deal with the refinements of life, are not lost sight of by the Australian people. Compulsory education for everyone and a high standard of living, progressive social services, attention to health, a sane attitude to spiritual elements, a partiality to music and the Fine Arts, and an appreciation of the aesthetic influence in the higher life of things are traits that characterise the majority of Australians.

#### THE SOCIOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTION.

Sociology was a factor of considerable help in the development of the aesthetic ideal in Australia, since sociology deals with the practical issues of life, the relationship between human beings, the objects of society and the manner in which the study of society helps individuals to a happier way of life. It deals (2) with the tendencies and trends which determine social movements; it examines the social structure and plans for its improvement; it concerns itself with poverty, unemployment, lack of education, the formation of societies for the betterment of the people, the foundation of asylums for the weak, hospitals for the sick, retreats for the aged and infirm, and the introduction of organisations to look after the deaf, the dumb and the mentally deficient.

Sociology also includes in its syllabus, the erection of primary schools for the young, churches, high schools, universities, mechanics institutes, etc., for the people—all of a sociological nature, yet of an aesthetic appeal, for the underlying ideal is that peace, harmony and beauty in every particular should characterise the Australian ideal. The Commonwealth wishes to see all her people happy (3) and contented, educated and cultured, sensitive to new movements yet enjoying to the full the benefits of their social heritage.

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(1) *Democracy in America*. (Alex de Tocqueville, Vol. II, Page 153).

(2) *Handbook of Sociology*. (Ogburn and Nimkoff).

(3) *Theories of Social Progress*. (A. J. Todd).

When happy sociological conditions exist in a community, when social features make the way of life satisfactory, and social services benefit the people, then it is that social doctrines and the social outlook tend to higher planes; the social (1) life moulds the intellectual and the cultural life. The group to which a man belongs and the culture in which he lives, determine to a degree his behaviour, his character, his personal style of living, his future, his ideals. When the sociological plane is satisfactory, the aesthetic self-consciousness is born and finds an opportunity to develop.

The idea the writer wishes to convey is that sociology and aestheticism are related; the more fertile the sociological soil the better the aesthetic result, for how is it possible to develop the aesthetic in people, if they are social outcasts, or how can the ideal of beauty mean anything for one who sees around him misery, poverty, social handicaps and depravity. An aesthetic mind requires the right atmosphere. If the aesthetic of the present period be of a higher form, than say fifty years ago, it is due to the better economic and sociological conditions that exist in the community, to the facilities—literary and social, that have been available, and to those factors—historical, psychological, scientific and religious that have made the development of the aesthetic possible. The aesthetic takes time, it develops with action, it needs schooling, it requires direction; its field is an extensive one; its basic analysis is more for the matured than for the young.

A varied social atmosphere for people causes variations in social ideals; people of different religions differ considerably in the background with which they are supplied; those on different economic levels vary substantially in their outlook, interests, and tastes. The ideals of the middle class are often regarded as higher than those of the aristocracy. The middle class more readily give the place of honour to art and science; the intellectual life of the middle class centres round the Fine Arts, Art Exhibitions, the Theatre, Lectures, Cultural Societies, Poetry, Prose, and the things that are aesthetically satisfying. The sociological soil of a country must be carefully observed. When it is interfered with or demolished, the injury extends to the art it supports, and to the artists who labour to build up a better world.

The sociological sphere today represents the theatres, picture shows, publishing houses, literary Associations, art activities, the radio, church and social work, etc., but the machine age, and the new "civilization", the present agitated social conditions

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(1) The Social Mind. (J. E. Boodin).

and the changed ways of life, are all tending to destroy the inherited art impulse of the people and all that it implies.

While many men in Australia since its foundation in 1788, helped the country generously and magnificently in a sociological way, so that today Australia stands high in the world as a great social laboratory, and as a place where the standard of living is high, the people happy and prosperous, yet for the purpose of this Thesis a few names are specially selected as individuals whose help was particularly salutary: a governor—Macquarie; a doctor—Bland; a missionary—Caroline Chisholm, a seer—Franklin; and three educational leaders—William Wilkins (N.S.W.), J. A. Hartley (S.A.), and Frank Tate (Vic.)—all these were contributors to the sociological welfare of their continent and to these pioneers the people are greatly indebted, for most of the things enjoyed by the Australian community today had their origin in their cultural and social outlook.

The sociological aspect of Australia's progress began with Governor Macquarie's "Policy of Social Regeneration"—a policy that aimed at building up a convict's character to make him worthy of the beautiful Australian country that was then taking form. His optimism (1) was founded on the invincible belief that there was in human nature something of the goodness that was in himself; he had unflinching confidence in the goodness of the human heart, he hoped for a reformation by his method of kindness, trusting that it would work miracles and produce some effect even on the worst under his control.

Amongst those who contributed largely to assist early Australia sociologically we find the name of Doctor William Bland, for he helped his country, not only in the medical sphere but spiritually and scientifically. The Benevolent Asylum, built in Sydney, 1820, and the Sydney Dispensary, founded in 1826, claimed much of his attention. The poor according to Norman Dunlop were his chief concern; for them he lived, and worked; he gave them freely of his best; for their sakes he remained poor, and in their care he died. He possessed all the qualities that go to make a great man: everyone knew the white-haired old gentleman, who drove about Sydney in a yellow carriage. He died in 1868 at the age of 79.

On the spiritual side Bland interested himself in the Sydney Mechanics School of Arts. In 1826 he furthered the cause of the Australian Subscription Library. It was due to Bland's untiring energy, that on Oct. 10th, 1846, the Australian Medical Subscription Library came into existence; he figured as one of its

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(1) Journal R.A.H.S., Vol. XVI, (1930). (Prof. G. A. Wood).



trustees and for many years, he was its president. The Library with its 1,000 volumes rendered excellent service to the community for 25 years. Dr. Bland was also the first president of the Australian Medical Association formed in 1858.

On the scientific side Bland worked out many inventions. His aneurysm needle, a surgical instrument acted admirably in operations on the larger blood vessels. He devised a method for combating fire on ships. The Atmotic Ship was another of his inventions. The Contrivance was a sausage-shaped balloon for ascending and descending in the atmosphere, and for sailing through it horizontally. The German Zeppelin bears such a resemblance to the Atmotic Ship, that some people consider that the Germans had some knowledge of Bland's vessel. With the vision of a prophet, he saw the potentialities of aeronautics. "Bland as a surgeon possessed in a pre-eminent degree the scientific spirit, the analytic mind, the inventive genius." Bland was "an elegant (1) scholar, a man of science and a gentleman of that antique school of urbanity and refinement, which modern barbarism and ruffianism have almost trampled into oblivion."

One of the greatest women that early New South Wales knew was Caroline Chisholm—one, who promised to know neither country nor creed, but to serve all justly and impartially. "I resolved to sacrifice my feelings, surrender my comfort nor consider my wishes as I mothered the wives and children of the convicts and the girls who landed in Australia as immigrants." The French historian, Michelet, wrote of her in the early sixties "The fifth part of the world, Australia, has up to now but one saint, one legend and that saint is an English woman."

It was in the field of organisation that Mrs. Chisholm shone. Her mind was practical, her eye observant, her manner full of tact. She began her public life by going to see the Governor—Sir George Gipps. An interview of this kind was the first in Australia, but it had the desired result, for the Governor could refuse nothing to a woman who possessed such perspicuity, sound judgment, and generosity. Mrs. Chisholm claimed that she personally settled 11,000 souls in comfortable conditions in Australia; another authoritative source puts the number at 14,000. Professor Hancock (2) says she was directly the founder of the system of family group settlement, and indirectly of the nomination system, which has always been a successful method of immigration.

Sir John Franklin was the Governor of Tasmania, or as it was then known Van Diemen's Land, (1840-1846) and he was noted for raising the cultured level of the colonists. In his

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(1) Note in The Melbourne Herald at his death, 1868.

(2) Australia (Hancock).

first speech to his Legislative Council, he drew attention to the crying need for education. He planned and brought into being a really national system of education in Tasmania, many years before such a system was adopted in England. He attempted to found an institution of higher learning to be called Christ's College but it was frustrated. In 1846, after Franklin left Van Diemen's Land, the scheme for the College was revived as a tripartite plan for a college with two feeder schools—the Launceston Grammar School and the Hutchins School, Hobart. Their foundation was the direct legacy of the movement, which Franklin initiated. The character of these schools took its colour from Franklin's work. Arnold of Rugby was Franklin's friend and adviser in his educational endeavours. He sent his old pupil, John Philip Gell, to the Colony as Principal of the projected Christ's College. Gell's sole aim in education was the propagation of Arnold's Educational theory and practice, and his influence on the foundation of Public School education was decisive. Because of Franklin's pioneering work, Tasmania became and long remained the educational leader among the Australian Colonies. Franklin's reputation and his lively interest in scientific matters drew a circle of people interested in science about him, and his attitude to them was the colleague, not the governor. He was the founder of the Tasmanian Society out of which the Royal Society of Tasmania later grew, —the first branch of the Royal Society founded outside the British Isles. The Tasmanian Society held its meeting at government house, and its successive secretaries were also the governor's private ones. The Tasmanian Society even published a *journal* giving an account of its work.

Social institutions under democratic control are reflections of the ideals of life possessed by the people. Social institutions first created for the privileged few, aimed finally at fulfilling without favour the demands of the many, but three men —educationists, spared no effort to provide the best that life can give to every one, particularly the poorer citizen. The three educationalists to whom Australia is greatly indebted are William Wilkins, J. A. Hartley, and Frank Tate. William Wilkins, fashioned the educational destiny and moulded the educational outlook of New South Wales from 1853-1883. He directed Sir Henry Parkes in his educational legislation, and it was his work to organise education, to hold the key to social stability, progress and prosperity. J. A. Hartley, 1878, did for South Australia work similar to what had been achieved in the Mother Colony by William Wilkins.

**Frank Tate**, as director of Education in Victoria for 28 years, insisted that the State should not only provide Primary education for all the young people, but that Secondary and Technical

education should also be included in its programme, and accordingly he established High Schools, Agricultural and Technical Schools all over Victoria. In addition, he was responsible for big educational changes, and the schools, due to his influence, became less formal and began to play a part as social and cultural centres in the community—the schools for the children became schools for the people, and a decided social asset for the general public.

These leaders in Australia, as well as many others, whom it is not possible to mention because want of space forbids it, paved the way and supplied the sociological material, so that at a later date an aesthetic ideal might be forthcoming. At the present time the citizens of the Australian Commonwealth are able to observe the aesthetic taste displayed in the public buildings that adorn their cities, in the hospitals that have been erected in different towns, in the churches, and cathedrals that impress the visitor, when he pays a friendly visit to the Austral shores; to the lovely gardens, beautiful homes the flowers and shrubs, the sunshine and grandeur, the order and cheerfulness that characterise the suburbs and residential areas of our towns and cities.

To further the discrimination of the citizens, art galleries are founded, libraries are established, culture groups are formed, philosophical circles speculate, literary meetings are held, art displays attract enthusiasts—all illustrate the rich and rare treasures of the spiritual world, all provide material for the furthering of the Australian Aesthetic.

## CHAPTER FIVE.

### THE CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS (Continued).

#### THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTION.

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|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. The Churches. | 3. The University. |
| 2. The Schools.  | 4. The Library.    |

#### INTRODUCTION.

The Psychological contribution represents more things in the Australian life than appear at first possible, for it refers to the mental side, the spiritual values. It includes religion, literature and art; it comprehends scientific endeavours and all mental activities; all cultural influences are included in its perview, for all these provide the foundation for the development of an aesthetic in a people.

The search for material wealth characterised the attitude of Australia's early settlers. Many established stations for the development of cattle and sheep industries; most settlers seemed wholly actuated by economic goals and terrestrial ambitions. The pioneer is rarely aesthetic in a conscious way; nature to him is an enemy to be conquered or a wild thing to be tamed.

The psychological contribution is best considered under headings, and in the divisions that follow, each psychological feature will be dealt with, and an effort made to show how each part, in different ways and at different times, was responsible for creating the atmosphere, or of providing the stimulus that the aesthetic requires to call it into play.

The Churches stressed spiritual values; the schools prepared young citizens for their future work; the libraries supplied the materials for complementary study or further knowledge; lectures given in the Mechanics Institutes or Extension Lectures emphasised that education is for the old as well as for the young; the university offered special facilities for those who required further training for professional avocations and aspired to those schools of learning that represent the treasure-house of information.

The establishment and work of the Churches will be dealt with first, and then the setting up of the educational scheme in the different parts of the continent will be shown as a marked contributory factor in the development of the aesthetic. The University, a definitely psychological factor, will be considered as an institution exercising a profound influence over the Australian Community, and enabling it to become well educated. The final section to receive attention will be the library, for the library is the Alma Mater of all prominent men and scholars.

## 1. THE CHURCHES.

The Church in Australia was contemporary with its first political settlement. The Rev. Richard Johnson arrived with the first Fleet, and he began his missionary work under the Southern Cross by holding open-air services in the months of February, March and April of the year 1788. (1) In a short time he erected a small "Wattle and daub" chapel, and in that makeshift (73 ft. x 15 ft.) he carried out his clerical duties until the chapel was destroyed by fire in 1798. The congregation that attended Mr. Johnson's services (excluding convicts) was a small but a fervent group, and it represented people keen to feed the spirit and to rise above the draw of material things.

The foundation of another Church was made at Parramatta in 1798, and was completed in 1803. The Rev. Mr. Johnson remained twelve years in New South Wales, and then returned to England, but other Anglican Ministers arrived in the Colony, the chief of whom was the Rev. S. Marsden.

On Jan. 8th, 1822, the Church of St. James, King St., Sydney, although unfinished at the time, was considered sufficiently advanced for holding religious service in it. (2) Other Churches in different parts of the colony were erected in the early years of the century:—Ebenezer, on a bend of the Hawkesbury; St. Matthews, Windsor; Christ Church, Newcastle; St. Luke's, Liverpool; St. Peter's, Campbelltown; St. Anne's, Ryde; St. Mary's Sydney, and a few others were amongst the first ecclesiastical buildings erected. Some of these figure now as places of historical interest; one or two have disappeared and St. Mary's destroyed by fire in 1865 was rebuilt, and now (1949) is one of the fine architectural triumphs of Sydney.

The Churches just mentioned, were erected chiefly by the free settlers and used by them, but as the governor of the Colony enforced church attendance for the convicts by cutting down their food allowance, a certain part of the Church was set aside for their accommodation. The Rev. Mr. Marsden, for example, always enjoyed one advantage as the government chaplain—he could always be sure of a congregation, even though it was but a pressed one. Judging by Governor Hunter's remarks relative to the convicts and some of their officers, the pressed congregation reaped little benefit from its attendance at church.

"A more wicked, abandoned and irreligious set of people have never been brought together in any part of the world . . . order or morality is not their wish, it interferes with the private views and pursuits of individuals of various descriptions."

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(1) Vol. XIX, Page 26, Journal of the R H. Society.

(2) Hist. Rec. of Aust., 1st Series, Vol. II, Pages 236-237.

It might be of interest here to mention on these pages what is recorded of the Rev. Richard Johnson. "He (1) was too sensitive because he was too egotistic. He thought too much about his dignity as a 'gentleman', and too little about the greatness and glory of the "first apostle" of the South Seas—His business was to plant acorns, but he was annoyed because they did not in the night-time grow to be oaks. Still he was a stickler, and he was out to learn. He went to Sydney without any pretence of enthusiasm, or even of interest in the work he had undertaken, and yet he remained twelve years."

In 1800 he sold out his lands "fairly successfully and according to his colleague, the Rev. Samuel Marsden, returned to England a skeleton from mere vexation and toil"—still he lived for 27 years and died at the age of 74; he was the "prosperous survivor of many martyrdoms."

Captain Tench looked upon him as the best farmer in the Country—he grew vines, strawberries, oranges, he even raised tobacco—he attributed the great heat of Sydney to the "universal sin in all ranks". The parson, in Sydney's early days, said Marsden, according to a letter of Dec. 3rd, 1796, printed in a newspaper and preserved in the Mitchell Library, had to be a gardener, farmer, magistrate, minister, so that when one duty did not call, another did. "In this infant Colony there is plenty of labour for every body—he who will not labour must not eat." The Rev. Johnson by his prudence and economy made a large fortune..

In Melbourne in 1836 when the first religious service was held, a gum tree provided the overhead canopy, a fallen broken branch a make-shift seat for worshippers as they listened to the sermon, the curious black watched the proceedings from the rear, and wondered what it all meant, as the Rev. Joseph Orton—the first clergyman (2) to officiate in Melbourne, tried to provide spiritual nutriment for his flock. The Sermon was on the text "What (3) shall I do to inherit life?" Mr. Orton was only a visiting clergyman and after a short stay in Port Phillip, he returned to Van Dieman's Land.

It is not necessary to mention all the details of Church progress in the Commonwealth. The growth of population, the increased facilities of travel, the spread of education, the better organisation of circuits, parishes, dioceses, etc., the increase in the number of clergy have all helped towards the development

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(1) Historical Records of N.S.W. (Newton, Vol. 2, Pages 273, 278).

(2) Holt's Memoirs, Vol, II, Page 97.

(3) Orton's Journal, preserved in the Mitchell Library, Sydney

For many years, the Bishops were importations from England and Ireland; the leading ecclesiastics represented selected scholars and Churchmen from the schools, seminaries and universities of England and Scotland. It was only in the past 50 years that efforts were made to train and educate the local students for the Clergy, and only in very recent years have the Churches in Australia enjoyed autonomy. The freedom shared, the tolerance displayed, the possibilities to be attained are things that impress the Church leaders who labour in its fields. (1) "Australia is a great free and glorious country . . . I believe a Church so manned will be a most important agent in the great work of raising this country to a high moral, social and political position . . . we cannot build without a foundation and the highest elevation is reached by digging deep."

Church difficulties were pronounced during the thirties and forties—the formative period in Australian ecclesiastical history, but in 1842, when Dr. Broughton was made the first Australian Anglican Bishop and Dr. Polding became the first Roman Catholic Archbishop, a forward move was remarked in church development. Other religious bodies—Presbyterians, Wesleyans, Congregationalists, etc., had their churches and their church interests, their problems and their difficulties, their foundation and development in every town in the continent, where a few of their followers gathered together, or where a number in a certain locality agreed to build a church, or erect a hall for religious duties, or for social service. The difficulty of securing clergymen and of providing churches was recognised by Dr. W. Grant Broughton in 1834 when, as Archdeacon, he wrote his charge. (2) "I cannot look on with tranquillity, while I see such extended and populous districts devoid of churches, devoid of clergymen, devoid of schools; the flock of Christ scattered without a shepherd, destitute in a world of all the means of Christ's instructions and devotion; and I should be ashamed of my own inactivity in the service of a Master, who has done such great things for me, if believing the possibility that my interposition in making known these wants might lead to their removal, I could hesitate at any person exerting or shrinking from any personal hazard which must be incurred in carrying that purpose into effect."

By degrees many churches were erected in different towns of the colonies; even in isolated country places the church and hall were built, and became a sort of community centre.

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(1) An address delivered by the Lord Bishop of Sydney. (Dr. F. Barker, April 15th, 1868).

(2) A charge delivered to the clergy of N.S.W. by Dr. W. Grant Broughton, 1834, prior to his going to England.

Churches of wood, blue-stone, and brick first appeared and at later dates free-stone and concrete were employed, but the Australians imitated the people of the Middle Ages, and of Central Europe, in their efforts to make their churches worthy of their country, and to introduce the ideals of truth, beauty and understanding to the members of their creed.

The question could be asked if the church today plays the same part that it did in days gone by. We read of religious gatherings that take place, of youth rallies that are held, a conference that deals with momentous matters of everyday life, but these things have little or no significance for the majority; the great mass of people do not go to church; church bells ring in vain for congregations to muster. The complaint is heard that churches are not filled, that recruits for the clergy and vocations for the army spiritual, are disturbingly lacking in numbers, "the harvest is great, but the labourers are few."

Yet, strange as it may appear, there seems to be no perceptible slipping back in the cultural field. It is possible that the 30% of church-goers acts as a leaven for the community and the articulate minority is able to maintain its pre-eminence in the ranks of the inarticulate majority.

The churches stand for Christian ideals, for social betterment, for cultural standards; and the emphasis of the spiritual as opposed to the material objective in life. The church preaches the advantages of refinement, discipline, purity, integrity, honour, peace, culture, charity; everything associated with it is on an elevated spiritual plane. The church is an aesthetic symbol for all that is good, true, and beautiful.

## 2. THE SCHOOLS.

### INTRODUCTION.

The real means to further the development and to secure the expression of the aesthetic in a community is the establishment, the organisation and the work of the schools. Australia had to wait some years before it was possible to ascribe to its schools cultural effects or a gleam of aesthetic blossom, but for the past fifty to sixty years, and perhaps longer, we have claimed with some truth that the schools, some more than others, have been most successful in producing the cultured young citizen; and we have looked to the youth as he finishes his studies at school, or completes his course at the University, as one on whom the Commonwealth will build its highest hopes, and the community repose its greatest confidence.



It is interesting to recall the first scholastic efforts made in Australia, and by comparison to show how much better provided for are the young citizens of today, compared with those who fought their way and struggled for supremacy in the first years of colonisation.

The desire to be educated, the insistence of the elders that their children must be equipped for life, the decree of the State that Education shall be "Free, Secular, and Compulsory", indicate in a convincing way that if aestheticism depends on education, then Australia provides all the successive stages for it, and that the stage for each generation is an improvement on the one before it.

The first Australian schools displayed the pioneering touch; the buildings were small and uncomfortable; the furnishings were often crude and inadequate; the aids were few and unsatisfactory. The surrounding bush formed a playground and the itinerant "black" was the only visitor. The boys and girls who attended the school and followed the classes had to be satisfied with the knowledge that an illiberal programme provided, and the bare essentials for study that a new country made available.

### THE FIRST SCHOOL.

The Rev. R. Johnson was the first to conduct a school in Australia. (1) He used the Church which he built in 1793, and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel promised to pay £10 a year to two of his teachers, one of whom was soon dismissed.

By 1790 i.e., two years after the arrival of Governor Phillip in N.S.W., 59 children had been born. About the year 1800, Governor King established an orphanage in the precincts of Sydney and in 1802 (2) there were 49 girls in the female orphanage school—ages 7-14. These few figures show in a small way how necessary it was to make provision for the education of children, even as early as 1800.

In August 1792, Wilberforce wrote to Dundas, urging him to send out to Australia a few persons on small salaries to take on the office of schoolmasters. (3) "I say small salaries because if you were to pay large ones, improper persons would accept the position." Whether these schoolmasters ever came is not recorded, but from 1800 onwards, there are found several references in the historical records of teachers who laboured in the scholastic vineyard.

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(1) H.R. of N.S.W., Vol. II, Page 282, Vol. III, Page 184.

(2) Lecture by Dora Peyser read before R.A.H.S., March 1939.

(3) Vol. I, Page 326. Hist. Records of N.S.W.

To the Rev. R. Johnson (1) who founded the first school for the children of Sydney in 1783 and to the efforts of William Richardson, and the second Chaplain, the Rev. S. Marsden and to some missionaries of the London Missionary Society, who settled in Sydney in 1798, we owe the crude beginning of education in Australia. In 1797, there were six schools under ecclesiastical jurisdiction. In the Hawkesbury River district, a voluntary school was established, then here and there in the colony, small schools were set up, some managed as private concerns, others encouraged with a Church backing, but in no case was the school on a firm footing, or the establishment one that was likely to last. For thirteen years, the first schools established did not receive aid from public funds. With the advent of Governor Macquarie, on Jan. 1st, 1816, a new educational phase was noticed, and he appointed salaried teachers in all the principal townships and settlements. In 1820 the Rev. Thomas Keddall arrived in Sydney, and he, as Director-General of the Government Public Schools, introduced the English National Scheme. In 1824, the Colony possessed twelve public schools, two orphanages and one aboriginal school.

In 1824, Archdeacon T. H. Scott submitted to the Earl of Bathurst in England the outline of a Public School system, he wished to see established in New South Wales. In 1830, Archdeacon W. G. Broughton set before Governor Darling a plan he proposed for affording to the people of the Colony the means of securing a liberal education, but the paucity of teachers and the economic difficulties of the time prevented any helpful development.

### SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

The first teacher to take up the work of Secondary Education in Australia was the Rev. Henry Fulton who arrived in Sydney, Jan. 13th 1800. In 1803 he had 40 pupils in his school.

Dr. O'Halloran opened a school in Phillip St.—he arrived in 1817. The Sydney Academy was an educational establishment kept by Isaac Wood. On his death in 1823, an arrangement was made with W. T. Cape and Henry Wrensford to keep the Academy going for a time. W. T. Cape was born in 1807. From his arrival in 1822, till his retirement at the end of 1858—a period of 37 years—he was Australia's leading teacher.

On Jan. 26 (2), 1830—the 48th anniversary of the Colony—Mr. Justice Francis Forbes laid the foundation stone of the Sydney college, afterwards named the Sydney Grammar School. More than 300 were present at the function, and a salute of twelve guns was fired in honour of the occasion.

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(1) The Philosophy of Australian Education. (D H Rankin).

(2) Lady Forbes Diary. (The Mitchell Library).

In the thirties, too, in New South Wales we note the foundation of several schools that played a big part and still play a part in the educational history of Australia. On Feb. 13th 1832 King's School was opened under the superintendence of the Rev. K. Forrest and the school soon won for itself the reputation of being the leading educational institution in New South Wales. In 1835 (1) an examination was conducted in the Sydney College, and at the examination the following were present Governor Bourke, Chief Justice Forbes and Dr. Polding who conducted the examination of the first year students in logic.

In 1832 Dr. Lang had his Australian College functioning, and about the same time Dr. Carmichael founded the Normal Institution. In 1833 Sir Richard Bourke broached his scheme for National Education and in 1836 the Legislative Council of New South Wales made a grant of £3,000 to set up the Irish National System, and to bring the Governor's plan into practice, but the intense opposition on the part of the Churches led to a delay, and it was not until 1848, that the National School Movement was inaugurated.

It is not necessary to indicate the gradual development of education and the foundation of schools—primary and secondary in the different colonies. The educational history of each state has appeared in several educational works written from time to time, and the work accomplished by leading educationists has received ample attention, but in the early years of the Australian foundation the paucity of the population, the inadequate revenue of the Colony, the unwise dependence on the Homeland, and the too frequent appeals of the early colonists to the Secretary of State made the first educationists dispirited and unhappy in finding their efforts meeting with such poor rewards.

In the early days the three "R's" reigned supreme in the curriculum, mere equipment for life was the aim, and when that equipment was secured, the school lost its interest, and a farewell to its sanctuary was the result. The accumulation of knowledge as food for the nurture and enrichment of the mind was a sealed book to most, the aesthetic appeal of education was neither appreciated nor understood.

The young people attending the first schools were children of those who were engaged in farming, pasture fields, mining or contracting. In some cases the children attended school for a month or two, then moved on to another locality—in rare cases did they remain at school after they reached the age of fourteen. Although the three R's represented the school curriculum, yet in many instances a love for literature, an appreciation for art, an

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(1) Sydney Gazette, December 22nd, 1835. (Mitchell Library).

appraisal for the better things of life were inculcated by the "bush" teacher, or by the enthusiastic pedagogue in localities where the school was larger and the population greater.

The scholastic progress of early Australia was slow. The lack of population and the difficulties of colonisation were responsible for the handicaps associated with the development of the first schools, but gradually the drawbacks were surmounted, the obstacles removed, still for the first fifty years, little was done in Australian Education that possessed a touch of the aesthetic, or figured prominently beyond the use of education as an instrument for equipment.

(1) A report presented to N.S.W. Parliament in 1856, by a special committee of enquiry stated that 20,000 children attended school, while 50,000 were of school age; many children spent their time around the wharves of the port, and the public houses of the locality, and became skilful in every kind of depravity. Many schools were as bad as the slums; some teachers gathered their scholars together in churches, some in cellars, several in hovels. Half of the schools were calculated to train the children in habits of dirt and indelicacy; 45% of the schools had insufficient books, 66% had not essential furniture. The National School at Yarrowlunla was destitute of everything; it was without books, slates, or even a desk, or a seat, and the teacher's sleeping apartment was scarcely good enough for a dog's kennel. The teachers were untrained, no system of school inspection existed, and the teaching done was wholly unsatisfactory.

Up to 1856 and even after that date, the different church organisations carried out an educational scheme to further education and to maintain control over the youth of the land.

In fact, the churches claimed that Education was their province and that education without religion was fatal to a State. By 1851, the broader view of national education gained ground and a compromise was reached. Two educational Boards functioned—one, the National Board, the other the Denominational Board, but the National Board with its programme of educating everybody by the State almost secured the victory by 1862, but in 1872, in Victoria, and in 1880, in New South Wales, and a little later in the other Colonies, the policy of "Free, Secular and Compulsory Education" became the law of the land.

The Philosophy of Public Education thus adopted was consistent with the ideal set forth by Sir Richard Bourke in 1833, and became a reality in practice towards the close of the 19th century. The success of that movement owed much to Sir Henry Parkes—one of Australia's great political rulers. "Education," he insisted, "is not something to be given to the elite of a nation to

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(1) Educational Report (N.S.W.) 1856

sunder the classes more than nature has done, but that it is something to develop the whole manhood and womanhood of a nation."

In 1910, the widening scope of the State and the more liberal interpretation of its functions for the youth of the country led it to establish Secondary Education, and High Schools were built and equipped in all the principal towns of each State.

After 1910, Secondary and technical education were included in the State's educational policy. The State is constantly adding new activities to its programme: each activity reflects a wider interpretation of the school aim, a more socially-minded outlook of the school work, and a more cultural and aesthetic advance on previous achievement.

The State High School system introduced into the Commonwealth was not conceived in a spirit of antagonism to non-State Secondary Schools. The motive was a worthy one, since the desire of the State was to provide Secondary education at a moderate cost to parents, so that a greater number of children might be able to receive a Secondary and sound education than would be the case if there were no High Schools. A second reason might also be suggested that the State would always have a sure supply of teachers for their schools, for young students in the High Schools are encouraged to join the teaching profession and to make teaching their avocation.

The High School Movement was not considered to be successful, when first introduced but it directly benefited the older type of schools by stirring into greater activity those people who believed in the ideals for which such schools stood, and the particular manner in which they were conducted. Today, 1949 the State High Schools are numerous, efficient and attract large numbers of students. The Commonwealth Year Book for 1947 states that the number of scholars attending State High Schools in Australia is

The aim of Australian educational leaders was in the words of Professor F. Anderson, Sydney, "to construct a flexible, coherent and comprehensive national system which should correspond to the economic and political ideals of the people." Ample evidence exists to indicate that this aim has been carried out and that the philosophy of public education i.e., the State educating everyone from the Kindergarten to the University is consistent with Australian ideals. The Private Schools, the Church Schools, Public Schools and State High Schools besides aiming at equipment for life, endeavour to build up character in their students. Character-building facilitates the development

of responsibility in the individual, and when a young person has the sense of responsibility the rest of his education presents little difficulty. The Church Schools, the Grammar Schools and what is known as the Great Public Schools—boarding schools for the most part—have done an immense amount of good work for the young people of Australia. Life with an ideal, character as an asset, hard work as an incentive, sport as a pastime, religion as a duty, success in life as an example to others, gentlemanly acts as a symbol of civilisation are the lessons such schools implant.

All schools also place considerable emphasis on honour as a first principle, the pursuit of culture as a refining social instrument, service to others as a worthy goal of life, the practice of generosity to others on all occasions; and as a result their alumni figure in all movements that are progressive, sociable, cultural and aesthetic.

The Headmaster (1)—Rev. A. St. John Gray in a speech at King's School in 1886 remarked *inter alia*:—

"Down at the bottom of the English Public School System, he could conceive of but one principle which lay at its basis: and that principle was honour and trust as between master and boy. Let a boy know that you trust him, and make him feel that you trust him—put him on his honour, make him understand that his master is not his gaoler, is not any slave-driver . . . make him understand that you are his friend, the best friend that he can have, one to whom his whole life and all its interests and all its cares and all its pleasures are part of his own life—that ideal he ventured to say had never been found to fail."

The Australian Educational System aims at providing for an educated Democracy. The State guides and guards the child from the Infants' School to the Primary, from the Primary to the Secondary School or the Technical School, from the Secondary School to the University. The State trains, equips, and holds the student until he is the finished product—the trained technician, the professional man, the accomplished scholar, the leader, the expert. Should the student prefer the occupation of the land, Agricultural Colleges and Young Farmers' Clubs are available for his instruction. An educated democracy secures for the State a healthier, a more progressive and a more wholesome condition of social organisation.

The Church Schools and Grammar Schools still in existence and functioning since the date of public education, the Catholic Schools illustrating what a cohesive body of people is

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(1) Cumberland Mercury. 19th June, 1886. (Mitchell Library).

able to accomplish without State aid, the Great Public Schools with their co-operative spirit and noble traditions, all help in the education of the people of the Commonwealth. The agricultural schools, the Technical Schools, the Adult Education Schemes, the various types of schools—Correspondence, Schools for the handicapped, Business Colleges, Military Schools also contribute their part—all kinds of schools are responsible for the progress of the people in education and culture—an education that will enable them to appreciate the aesthetic and to realise its objective.

For most effective results Schools of learning, like other human institutions, must not lose their first love, and degenerate into tradition, doing their work in a perfunctory manner, without even the consciousness of the end which it was meant to serve. Those (1) who elect to be teachers most often are scholars and occasionally esteem knowledge not for its use in attaining other values, but as a value in itself, and hence place an undue emphasis upon what is formal and nice about it, leaving out what is less pleasing to the instinct for classification but more needful to the art of life.

As the teachers are the leaders in the educational and cultural fields of the State, and as the development of the country's children depends on their good will, their love of labour, their interest in their work, in their broad scholarship, their high moral character, their enthusiastic spirit and their power as leaders, it is essential that the State should recognise their worth and their place in the community, and consequently reward them accordingly. Trained teachers are a national asset; they are the salt of the earth. With their personality, tact, skill, sympathy and consistency they know how to utilise such gifts as valuable aids to help their work in the schools and to further their influence in their community.

Teachers are invariably happy men and women. As they work in congenial surroundings all the year, their environment is the best, associated as they are with the young and enthusiastic, with those that are sincere, easily pleased, and who radiate the sunshine of life. The teachers' hours of labour, the frequency of vacations, the consciousness of the great importance to Society of their work, and the realisation that they are forming the future leaders of the nation, make them cheery optimists, inspired with the enthusiasm, vision and ideals to do the best for their country.

As the teacher is democratic by habit and temper, he becomes the one who is trusted by the parents to educate, direct, and secure, for their children, a praiseworthy place in the life

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(1) Enjoyment of Poetry. (Max Eastman).

of the nation. The teacher is the child's protector, the students' friend, the youth's final court of appeal; his address, style, courtesy and culture make their silent appeal on the characters of the young. If the teacher in addition, be a sportsman, his success with his young people, his power as an educator is considerably increased. Finally, the teacher not necessarily the ideal one, is a man of ideas, one who believes that education is the panacea for the problems of the world, and that the better the nation is educated, the fewer social evils will worry it, and the higher will be its cultural tone, and the more satisfactory aesthetic results will be its portion. Attention to aesthetics would also tend to reduce the mental disorders so frequently found in the community.

A great many of the lady teachers get married and cease their connection with the Education Department and their work in the schools, but as the wives of men on the land—farmers, squatters, pastoralists, etc., or as helpmates to industrialists, business and professional men in the city areas, their sphere of labour may be more limited but it is no less cultural. The lady teacher when married makes an excellent wife and an efficient mother; her methodical training and her teaching in the schools make her a fitting instrument for providing for the Commonwealth an educated and ambitious democracy. It is in an educated community that aestheticism attracts attention; consequently then the flowers of its plants originate in the home and the home is pre-eminently the woman's sphere of activity.

Political historians deal only with the State; historians of literature portray the tendencies of a few exceptional minds, musical critics deal with sounds that are evanescent and transient, yet the middle class people and the teachers for the most part, whose influence in the State is far-reaching, whose moral and spiritual status is worthy of consideration, whose respect for intellectual values is not indifferent, when public opinion controls practically all legislative measures, as yet has had no study of its aesthetic (1). The philosophy of public education, that the Middle Class in the main utilises, enables it to have aesthetic tendencies, secular in tempo no doubt, but fruitful in drawing men to a common centre, even across national borders, and helping them to enjoy in full the best in life that education alone provides.

The short cut to the glittering prize of success for many has been the ladder of education. A good degree or a high place in the examination lists appears too often as the objective of

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(1) Bclphégor (Julian Benda) 1929



learning, not an education in the sense of knowledge and culture. Public appointments in the world of affairs, or equipment for a profession, or efficiency in the work of life, is often the sole motive for pursuing a higher education, but other things—a cultural life, the world of books, art, music architecture, science and scientific interests and the development of an aesthetic in these fields is surely a worthy motive among the better and nobler things in life.

The middle class would have its aesthetic, if more stress were laid on schemes to further middle-class education. One scheme—adult education has been tried with varying success, but until recently it has not received the support it deserves. Library development and frequent popular lectures on music, art, literature, architecture, etc., by capable and enthusiastic lecturers will help to develop a middle class aesthetic. The middle class is the reading class, and in literature, as in the national life, the middle class insists on going along its own middle-class way, hearkening to the clarion call of that great literature which communicates between man and man the secret of human hearts and the story of man's vicissitudes and triumphs.

### 3. THE UNIVERSITY.

The foundation of the University in Sydney in 1850, and in Melbourne in 1854, was the great cultural effort in the history of Colonial Australia and when the Statesmen and scholars who were responsible for its foundation saw their ideal a reality, and their plan to provide for young Australians the equipment, training and liberal education that a University provided, they were happy beyond measure and they felt that Australia's future was secured when such cultural provision was at hand a short sixty years after its political foundation in 1788.

The University, according to the founders was to be non-sectarian. Governor Gipps had said that Education was impossible "without the co-operation of the ministers of religion." Wentworth insisted that both the senate and the teaching staff must be laymen. He defied the parsons, when they protested against such a resolution. Wentworth denied vigorously that his University would be an infidel institution; on the contrary, it would cultivate that true understanding without which real religion was impossible.

Wentworth knew that New South Wales was on the brink of securing Responsible Government, but this, he saw, would be only possible through national education—education must train the people to "fill the high offices of State (1) . . . it must elevate

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(1) Leg. Council Speeches of W. Wentworth (1849).

and enlighten the minds of the people, achievement must be the goal." The University was "to enlighten the mind, to refine the understanding and to elevate the soul of the fellowman. The Higher Education was carried, the more elevated the state of morality of the Colony would become."

In moving the bill for the foundation of the University, W. C. Wentworth said that the measure "contained the germs of immortality." On October 1849, in one of his speeches he said (1), "he believed that from the moment of the existence of the University institution, a new and beneficent light would shed its beams on the lowliest dwelling in Australia, which would provide warmth and life to the humblest aspirant after the great and the good." Twelve years later, he expressed the opinion that the setting up of the University was the most enduring act of his whole public life.

When they were selecting the first professors, they received as the essence of their institution a quotation from Dr. Arnold (2) — "We require for our purpose gentlemen, scholars, men of ability, and vigour of character, to become the parents of educators of a country rapidly rising into greatness, qualified to assist in laying the foundations of all good and noble principles, and to induce our youth to submit to the discipline of education for the sake of its ultimate fruit." Such were the ideals with which the first University in Australia was launched.

The Act that founded the University provided a grant of £30,000 for the erection of buildings, and a permanent endowment of £5,000 a year for the support of its upkeep. The University made its beginning in the Sydney College, but when the buildings were erected in the grounds of the 128 acres of Grose Farm, it transferred its activities there towards the close of 1852. The first three professors were Rev. John Woolley (Classics), Mr. B. Pell (Mathematics), Mr. John Smith (Chemistry and Experimental Physics). Mr. Kennedy was appointed as the first registrar.

The Inauguration ceremony was held on October 11th 1852 in the great hall of the University. Sir Charles Nicholson, the vice-provost in a famous address, told the assembled audience "to a youth emulous of literary honour and the reward of scholarship, no institution existed in the colony in which he might meet with kindred spirits imbued with the same love for letters, burning with the same desire for distinction and ready to join in the same intellectual race with himself." The speaker put ideals before his hearers. "Although Australia had no past, it had a future, fame was not founded on the vulgar attribute of wealth, or any

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(1) History of Sydney University. (Barff, Page 16).

(2) Ibid.

other accidental distinction—it was a satisfaction, pure and ethereal in its character, the highest award of every true academician.”

The University in Sydney, and the same was true of the Universities in Melbourne and Adelaide, soon after their foundation received many gifts from private individuals. A strong public feeling existed that to enrich seats of learning was the most honourable use of wealth. The University of Adelaide, in fact, was created due to the munificence of a man who made a large fortune from the copper mines of Yorke Peninsula. Sir Samuel Wilson's bequest of £30,000 which by the accumulation of interest amounted to £37,000 was of great assistance to the Melbourne University, but more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  a million pounds represented the contribution of private sources to Sydney's University. Thomas Fisher's donation of £30,000 that was responsible for the foundation of the Fisher Library, the J.H. Challis bequest of £257,000 and the P. N. Russell bequest of £100,000 were liberal donations that were greatly appreciated, but the Nicholson Museum merits special notice. Sir John Nicholson made frequent gifts to the Sydney University from his accumulated treasures of great antiquarian interest, and they served to form the valuable collection of Egyptian, Etruscan, Greek and Roman antiquities which can be seen and studied at the University to this day. Private wealth has been exceptionally generous to all the Australian Universities, and such generosity has been helpful in providing scholarships for ability and prizes to encourage students to pursue their studies to a higher stage of efficiency.

In 1852 the Sydney University was opened, and although it received much encouragement from the founders, the statesmen of the early fifties, and the public-spirited men of the time, yet it failed to develop as its patrons would have wished; for thirty years it remained an unknown academy. In 1877 Sir William Manning was elected Chancellor of the University of Sydney and for sixteen years he laboured for the advancement of that institution. When he was made Chancellor, there were only 58 students at the University. Teaching was restricted to a minimum, and the institution was almost stagnant by reason of poverty and inability to get off the beaten track. The University was unpopular, and although it was recognised as the chief seat of higher learning, it was looked upon as the property of the favoured few. A change was made, and an academic revival took place, mostly due to the energy, enterprise and inspiration of the Chancellor. Not until 1882, did one hundred students matriculate in one year. In 1880, it received the John Henry Challis bequest, and five years later the Thomas Fisher gift followed, which put the library on a sound footing. This definite

academic change as well as others though not of an academic nature that occurred in the eighties, presaged startling cultural developments in the history of Australia. Special Schools were established for Medicine, Natural Philosophy, Modern Languages, etc.

In 1882 women were admitted to the University and to all its advantages. Manning House (1)—the Women's Club at the University stands today as an expression of feminine appreciation for the man who worked for the admission of women to Sydney's chief seat of learning. At the age of 83, Manning gave his last address at the University Commencement of 1894—he died in 1895.

Melbourne University also developed half-heartedly at first; students were slow to utilise its class rooms, and qualify for degrees, but its forward move occurred about the same time as the academic movement in Sydney, and in some ways and in some particulars, Melbourne enjoyed advantages unknown to the students of the older state.

Adelaide made ample provision for its University due to the generosity of an individual. Its schools were never unwieldy as regards numbers, but its development was regular and methodical rather than startling and extraordinary.

Sir Wm. Windeyer in April 1895 in his address as Chancellor to students and friends of the Sydney University mentioned *inter alia*: "Our poetry is not of the past, but of the present. With us the glorious anticipation of hope must take the place of a splendid past . . . All honour to Wentworth, Lowe, and Douglas! All honour to Nicholson, Merewether, Deas-Thompson and to Manning and to other public men, whose names, though not recorded, are not forgotten . . . Universities are not made of buildings but brains . . . We have not, as in the history of the great old Universities, the mellow light of age which everywhere pervades their assemblage, streaming through starred windows richly light. No cloisters are ours, worn by the tread of students who have made her history the history of civilisation and of freedom throughout the world, but . . ."

This address and similar ones made from time to time at University functions, by eminent academic, cultural and political leaders, indicated that the University was considered by all as holding a prominent place in the community from a cultural and aesthetic point of view. The duty of the University was to uphold scholarship, to raise the spiritual standard, to encourage students to put forth their best, to insist that al-

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(1) Journal and Proceedings R.A.H.S., Vol. XII, Page 66

though they have done well( they could still do better; that in a University only the highest, the noblest, the almost-un-attainable goals are worthy of consideration, and that the Alumni of a University are expected to be those who when they quit their academic halls exert an influence for good on their fellow-men in the world, and uphold everywhere the value of cultural ideals, the advantages of enlightenment and, at least, a general knowledge of aesthetic activity.

The University of Tasmania began in 1890, but its development was disappointing, and its power to function satisfactorily was slow, even though at its inception the Hon. Dr. Butler hoped that Tasmania would soon become the Athens of Australia. By Sept. 5th, 1892 only 7 students had matriculated. By degrees the students increased, the teaching staff was augmented and Tasmania today enjoys a certain amount of academic prestige.

The Universities at Brisbane and Perth are of more recent origin dating from 1910. They are considered modern Universities and have yet to found as many schools of scholarship as the older Universities provide for their students. Canberra University, now in course of formation will be mostly a research school and a sphere for post-graduate work.

In a letter (1) to Dr. Forrest, July 22nd, 1862, John Henry Newman from his oratory in Birmingham, expressed the wish that St. John's College, just founded (Sydney University) would achieve great cultural and aesthetic results in Australia, inter alla, he wrote "It rejoices me to hear that you are so happily situated at Sydney. There is a peaceful satisfaction in belonging to a young country, and in laying the foundation of a great institution like yours."

Newman knew that a University enjoyed certain advantages when the foundation was made in a new but distant land. Today it is probable that 30,000 students attend the Universities of the Commonwealth, or approximately one out of every 250 of the population—a number that has yet to improve, but a number satisfactory from the present administrative point of view. Australian Universities, as we have seen, did not blossom at first, but like aloes, waited for some years before flowering—the wait enabled them to gather up the strength and the impetus that characterised them under Federation.

The University is as an oasis in the desert of the workaday world; it is a retreat for scholarship and study, a place of culture for those who seek it, a happy memory for those who studied in its disciplinary halls. The University is a missionary College sending out each year leaders for the State, pastors, doctors

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(1) Letter extant, St. John's College, Sydney.

jurists, teachers, politicians—above all scholars—men and women with an abiding interest in all those things that have a spiritual significance. Aesthetic was born with the first poets; some in the course (1) of time lost sight of their magnetic North, others had the heart of the poet, as George Eliot termed it, but not the voice; others again, the salt of the earth, among whom the University graduates figure, possessed the supreme gift of culture and knowledge and gave its results to the public.

It is incumbent on the poet that he has something rare to say, as well as possessing some rich mode of saying it. The University, even if, it does not speak to the world in the same language as the poet, must provide those facilities for students, who will enter its schools and learn those lessons that they will utilise in trying to better the world the same as the poet does. The education received in the University moulds the outlook of all educated men, and thus affects politics, administration, the professions, industry, and commerce. The work of the university penetrates almost into every activity of life. Its aim is to train students in quality, values, a sense of perspective, a love of the best things in life, to appreciate high ideals, to develop the aesthetic sense and (2) to see that whatever they do, or whatever they touch bears the aesthetic stamp.

Sir Richard Livingstone (3) in an address to University students suggested to them "a study of religion, or of philosophy, or of both, to make them the select souls who raise themselves on the broader shoulders of humanity. Universities exert great influence on the world and they should send out into it men fully equipped, not merely to use and improve the means of life, but to direct and inspire its ends and to be instruments in its regeneration." He also warned Universities "that they should beware of a tendency in the humanities to develop their less humane aspect, and to avoid looking on subjects as ends in themselves. He insisted that they should be careful not to lose contact with life, in so far as contributing little or nothing to humanising their students. To abolish universities was a sure way to destroy civilisation." The speaker could have added that to enrich life and make a wise, progressive, prosperous and happy Commonwealth, was best secured by furthering the work of the University economically, socially and spiritually. The university should endeavour to make each individual student a higher social unit, so that he could make his mark in bringing forth into the world intellectual children and disciples to carry

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(1) *A Study in Comparative Aesthetics.* (Colin McAlpin).

(2) *Literary Craftsmanship and Appreciation.* (R. Fuller).

(3) Speech delivered October 29th, 1947 (University Commemoration).

on the cultural torch of faith, hope, wisdom and the humane spirit that points the way to the better life.

#### 4. THE LIBRARY.

The development of Australian Culture was helped largely by the use of the Library. The early arrivals in Australia, whose industry and love for letters and literature enabled them to gather together the books necessary to build up small libraries, did it solely, because they knew the beneficial effects of reading, the soul-satisfying effect of learning what the great men of the past thought, what the leaders of different epochs have said and done, and what contemporary thought presents to the people of their day. Libraries and books keep the world civilised; the individual dies but on the library shelf his book reposes until required. A library, therefore, is a place in which books are stored and used, the great school where the works of man, the contents of his thought, the expression of his aesthetic are found and perused. Books are the lasting products of mankind, the treasures that outlast all else. "The (1) Iliad and Odyssey are still on earth, even though the rest of the Aegean culture which they represent is virtually gone."

A library is a venerable place "where men preserve the history of their experiences, their tentative experiments, their discoveries, their plans, their speculations, their high ideals, their researches into the stories of nations." A Library is the home of a friend—a place where one passes happy and educative hours, delving into the past and becoming acquainted with the world's wisdom. In the library the books speak to one, telling him what no one in person cares to tell him; chiding him occasionally for his failure to reach certain standards, urging him on always with the hope that he, the reader, might achieve the position that the book so aptly describes. In the library, too, one finds the books that cannot be bought in the shop, the treasures that are termed classics, the works that are immortal, the reading of which exercises such a fascination that they are read again and again.

The library controls a larger collection of books than schools and colleges; it provides advanced material as well as lighter matter; it is the real educational force in the community for one and all, from childhood to matured age.

In the library, too, one finds the scholars and the men of erudition. The library is loved for the information it supplies, for the quiet that exists in its halls, for the salutary associations it brings in its train, and for the happiness that follows the hours spent in its compartments. When Plato speaks of

Philosophia, it is rightly concluded that he means the pursuit of general scholarship, and it is in the library that general scholarship is sought and secured. The frequent visitor to the library finds it a friendly place, and his reading there is an educative process, requiring practice and a certain amount of efficiency. One of the greatest pleasures in literature is following a character through the stress and turmoil of his adventures to see him safely housed at last.

E. Morris Miller (1) insists that the main purpose of a library is not the accumulation of books ready on demand, but that its fundamental work is to elevate the life-ideals of its readers and to render them efficient in their capacity as citizens. A Library, he writes, needs librarians, who know how to guide readers; it furthermore requires an atmosphere of culture, a sort of cloistral seclusion, to assist the reader, while special facilities should be available for scholars and research students—even the lending to them of volumes, when necessary, for libraries should be real factors in the dissemination of the sources of knowledge amongst individuals capable of profiting by them. The librarian, he maintains, should associate himself with public movements in furtherance of the interests of the library, and that he should exalt his profession beyond that of being a mere caretaker or custodian.

Library organisations, according to the same authority, should make provision for the training of teachers and when this work is done in connection with the University, the teachers so trained, should be prepared to undertake useful service for the common good, to apply themselves with ease to the varying needs of the time, to acquire an adequate first-hand knowledge of books and libraries, and be factors for whatever furthers cultural progress.

#### THE AUSTRALIAN LIBRARY.

Australia was not many years old when the formation of a library was noted. The Australian Philosophical Society formed in June 1821 had for one of its aims, the lending of books to its members. Each member of the small society loaned to other members whatever books he had available in his home, and thus reading received a direct encouragement. In the early history of New South Wales there are several references to the formation of small libraries. A few of the early settlers possessed a wise collection of books.

Mrs. J. MacArthur had a small but select library; Mrs. Macquarie, an amiable (2) and benevolent woman, made many friends by lending her books. Mrs. King, the wife of Governor

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(1) Libraries and Education. (E. Morris Miller).

(2) Mrs Macarthur's Letters. (M. Library).



King (1800-1807), collected a rare assortment of books. In the thirties, N. D. Stenhouse possessed a remarkable library at his home in Balmain; D. H. Deniehy in 1844 boasted of a good library in Pitt St. "A library (1) which for taste, choice and elegance, no other approached." These libraries were not like some that existed in the 12th century e.g. The Abbey of Monte Cassino (2)—the home of St. Benedict, which was proud of its 70 books in its library—books of a theological, liturgical, classical and historical nature. In the Bec Monastery, where "every other monk seemed a philosopher", there were 164 books; while Cluny, with its 570 volumes of all kinds, was regarded as an extensive library. The early Sydney libraries had on their shelves, thousands of books. Deniehy's books, according to the biographer, weighed three tons.

The Rev. Samuel Marsden returned from England to Australia in 1809 and he brought with him a large supply of books—books that were to be lent to people who were encouraged to read them. The oldest Australian library, established in 1826, possessed 18,000 volumes in 1866, while the Mechanical School of Arts, established in Sydney in 1833, had 13,000 volumes.

The Victorian Parliament in 1853 set aside £3000 for a free Public Library which was opened in 1856. Sydney established its free Public Library in 1869, but in 1895, the name was changed to the Public Library of New South Wales. Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth and Hobart, have also big and useful public libraries. The Central Library at Canberra gathers and preserves the ablest and most highly specialised books, and makes them available to all accredited scholars through inter-library loans.

Victoria from 1837-1847, meant for its pioneers a life of an unvaried round of strenuous labour. Its metropolis was without drainage or a proper water-supply; its streets were unpaved; oil-lamps dimly lit the streets by night, few houses possessed home-making comforts, yet in Oct. 1839 The Mechanics Institute—now the Atheneum began its cultural career. In 1842 (Sir) Redmond Barry (3) set aside a room next to the Jewish Synagogue in Bourke St. for a free circulating library, and furnished it with a fair collection of standard works and English magazines. In that room people were encouraged to spend a pleasant evening reading and to some people Mr. Barry loaned his most treasured books. Barry was an inspiring spirit and a man of enthusiasm, as well as of a wide range of knowledge.

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(1) Life and Speeches of D. H. Deniehy. (E. A. Martin).

(2) The Golden, Middle Age. (Roger Lloyd).

(2) Journal of H.S. (Vic.).

The meetings of the Mechanics Institute were held at first in the Scots school-room, next to the Presbyterian Church, Collins St. After a few months, its rooms were removed to a cottage in Bourke St. T. H. Osborne was the head and fountain of the institute, and for some time its secretary. He was also a man of literary tastes and experience in journalism; in Ireland he had been a Presbyterian Minister.

In 1840 (1) the Mechanics Institute had a membership of 250 and in that year, too, the present place of location was bought. Since that date the Melbourne Mechanics Institute has used its rooms and its valuable library as vehicles for the diffusion of culture in the city, and its numerous members have always had the benefit of an intellectual atmosphere for igniting creative minds, and furthering the development of the aesthetic, enabling it to seek a higher outlook on life, and to purify its social and aesthetic tone.

The sudden expansion of the Lending Library, the rise of the Book Club, the introduction of small Commercial libraries have become dominant features in the economic structure of Australian Letters. The Lending Library made possible the circulation of books that otherwise would not have been possible, and it gave readers an opportunity to read books in their homes, at their own time and convenience. The Book Clubs too, increased the facilities for reading, and enabled its members to get in touch with the latest books supplied by the publishers.

One Section of the Library is known as the Newspaper room, and in that part papers and magazines may be perused, and even studied, when historical matters are receiving attention. The newspaper files of the early Australian days are most valuable from an historical point of view. Many people look to the newspapers and magazines as a foremost source of literary entertainment—the newspaper has made literature a universal interest, but it does not require the sustained and concentrated attention that a book demands. Its news is often patchy, its matter is nothing but a series of incidents, page after page merely excites a temporary interest or stirs up a passing thought. The newspaper deals mostly with the abnormal in social life. When today's paper is brought to our door, yesterday's paper ceases to be of any interest, for things that are ephemeral make the characteristic matter of journalism. Journalism is then floating literature, and the same is true of periodical literature from the daily newspaper to the magazine and quarterly review. Oral literature can be classed as floating, and what is true of newspaper work is equally true of lectures given or speeches delivered.

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(1) Victorian Hist. Magazine. Vol V. Page 85.

With journalism reading is made universal—it is cheap and accessible, the body of the paper is the organ of its public life. Authorship is affected since the matter in the paper becomes anonymous with a corresponding loss of responsibility. The distinction between floating and fixed literature has a bearing upon questions of genuineness, authenticity and date. Floating literature tends to deprive one of the power of recognising literary vitality, when he seeks it, but the writer of a book—the professional man presents his materials to be read, studied and analysed so that he can be criticised, or imitated for style, or followed for guidance. Some books pass from the age of oral poetry to the age of written literature e.g. the Book of Job or again, sayings and aphorisms of a philosopher, if put into book form, represent valuable written literature.

It is unnecessary to give further details relative to the development of libraries in Australia, save to mention that each capital city has become famous for its library; in many suburbs of the capital cities libraries are provided and are often well equipped; practically every town in the country has a library of some sort or other. The supply of books from the main general library sent out each month to help smaller country libraries, or to supply reading circles with books, is perhaps the most satisfactory phase of the cultural work of the people, and a tribute to their aesthetic. The State by carrying out a policy of lending books and sending those books to the remotest parts of the country supplies a valuable aid to further the cultural efforts of the people. The Public Lending Library of Victoria loaned 253,785 books in 1940, while in 1948 the loan was 186,961.

It might be asked who visits and utilises the Library, and what is its cultural and aesthetic value. The question is best answered by a visitor to another State, e.g., Suppose a Victorian visits the Sydney Public Library, he finds a new building—large, well-lighted, comfortable—an architectural asset to the city. The entrance is impressive, the historical significance manifest, the whole atmosphere healthy and inspiring. When the library is entered, the room appears to be full—readers, students, research scholars—men and women—young and old, all are absorbed in the quest for knowledge. An estimation of the number present at one time would approximate 300—at odd times, there are more present, occasionally the number is less. In addition to the main library, there is the Mitchell Library, where Australian literature is housed, and where special arrangements are made for students, who wish to study the facts and figures of Australia's past.

In the main library, practically every book needed can be obtained. At a special desk enquiries are made, and the existence and location of a book is obtained in a few minutes. A

superficial analysis of the readers discovers them to be old and young, men and women, boys and girls in their teens, but all in earnest, all keen, all occupied—all students in the school of knowledge. Many read as a preparation for an examination, others for recreative purposes, some to solve their problems, but another group, by no means a small one, reads with an aesthetic end in view. Literature, history, philosophy, music, philology, archeology, art-criticism, etc., are the subjects best suited for a schooling (1) in the appreciation of beautiful things as beautiful, for elucidating the value of beauty for the enrichment of life. Such studies pursued in the library hold the attention of the readers, make hours pass like minutes and develop an interest in the particular subject of study for its own sake—which, according to Professor Mitchell, is an aesthetic interest.

### THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONTRIBUTION.

For the development of an aesthetic among a people the philosophical outlook is as important as the psychological or economic one. The philosophical outlook comprehends the view of life entertained by the members of the community, the efforts they make, the means they take, and the goal at which they expect to arrive. Australians practically from the year 1820 have enjoyed a feeling of freedom; the people have always had a sense of equality; they have not known the terrors of poverty, the evils of class distinction, the unfavourable results that follow from caste systems or from privileged sections. The free settlers, who came to Australia, were hardy, brave, and progressive men; they faced unknown trials with courage and determination, they followed their avocation with success; good seasons, fertile soil and ready markets brought it to pass that the returns for their arduous labours were quick, ample and satisfying.

In quick succession industries were set in motion. John Macarthur found the golden fleece, John Kruse began agriculture, Gregory Blaxland (2) developed the wine trade, and so successful was he, that in 1822, he exported wine, and in 1823, The Royal Society of Arts awarded him a large silver medal, and in 1827 a gold medal, for the quality of his wines. (Both medals are on show in the Mitchell Library.) Hundreds of others helped in building up a stable economy and by utilising (3) a political philosophy as a contribution to efficient thinking on practical politics, it enabled them to catch a glimpse

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(1) Training in Appreciation. (Ed. N. Colly).

(2) Journal R.A.H.S., No. 22, Page 34.

(3) State and Morals. (T. D. Weldon).

of a new world of beauty, opening up to them wider and faire horizons than they had hitherto known. The presence in the midst of Mechanics Institutes, the foundation of the Sydney University in 1850 and the Melbourne one in 1854 as well as other subsidiary educational institutions gave facilities to the people to add to their spiritual experience and to develop those personal (1) factors that condition the degrees of the aesthetic response in each individual.

The Australian of the formative period in Australian History desired only the best; he insisted on the attainment of high standards; he was restless for better and nobler conditions of life; he was zealous for the planting of high ideals in the youth of the land—all pre-requisites for the emergence of the aesthetic in an aspiring society.

Australia almost from its foundation developed a middle-class ascendancy; one's success in life depended on individual effort; efficiency, not birth or privilege, was the sine qua non for the attainment of position. Few people of high birth or of illustrious associations lived in the land; alliances with foreign families or inter-marriages with the nobility of European countries were practically unknown and unexpected; in its literature there was no aristocratic dictatorship the same as existed in France during the reign of Louis XIV; its art was without royal approval and its artists worked away without the encouragement of a courtly pleasing patronage. Australia wished to carry out its own policy, and to plan in its own middle class way and develop those elements of character that bring success. The philosophy of the Australian made him set forth his theory of life—a philosophy which distinguished the essential from the accidental, and encouraged him to contemplate, to co-ordinate, to unify, to seek the facts that harmonise, to place the accent upon synthesis, and thus to produce the synthetic attitude of mind.

It would seem, too, that in the history of Australia (1820-1948) in the main a sort of golden age always manifested itself, when the workman did his best, the statesman laboured for the common good, the artist endeavoured to instruct, the teacher guided, the pastor "allured to brighter worlds", and the ordinary man enjoyed the best that life provided.

The absence of undue luxury has saved the Australians from the wanton cares of the sense, or the weaknesses that assail the wealthy; the climate has enabled almost all to enjoy the blessing of good health; common sense actuates most, and while the men work and seek to build up for security, the women help to create its aesthetic. In the drawing room they discuss

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(1) The Beautiful in Music. (M. Schoen).

aesthetics; they are not afraid to act as leaders; in the ordinary societies—The Dickens, The Browning, The Shakespeare, The Kipling, The Poetry Lovers, The Australian Literature, etc., the women predominate, the aesthetics of good society is mostly created by the women, their influence tends to purify, their presence serves as a cultural tonic. Hedonism and self-sacrifice, pleasure-seeking, and asceticism, the worldly spirit and the unworldly one are characteristics according to some that represent the Australian.

From one point of view it would appear that Australia is a land of pleasure-seekers; its social sets exist not for intellectual or aesthetic culture but for the achievement of pleasure; many even conceive that the right to achieve pleasure is a fundamental moral duty, and its achievement the supreme test of the successful life. Some assert that the Australian's insistence on, and possession of his personal qualities as pleasing manners, geniality, cleverness, savoir-faire, religion, politics, the charm of conversation, vivacity, is all attributable to his pleasure-seeking propensity.

The ascetic life and the unworldly spirit are not strikingly manifest in the Australian, yet religion exercises some control over him, and Churches are found in all parts of the continent. The Family Life for most people is related to religion and there exists an inter-connection of religious and social organisations. Church schools are numerous and they educate a noticeable percentage of the young, while the members of religious orders, the ministry of different churches, the secluded life led by some religious devotees and the prolonged studies of great scholars represent to some extent the ascetic side of life of the Australian. If religion (1) brings peace to the soul, ease to the intolerable strain of an over-active mind, a helpful philosophy for the ways of life, a noble aim to accomplish something for humanity, then its need is apparent, and its presence and experience are an advantage to the individual.

In Australia's short history there has been all along the individual's awakening to a new ideal in life; this awakening—a rebellion some would call it—has been noted in economics, politics, education, sociology, culture, aesthetics; the unrest is man's demand that life assumes for him a new abundance, that it leads (1) to the living of a rich full life, the attainment of as complete a happiness as possible. The economic world is as restless as the sea; the political stage is forever planning for new conditions; the educational institution has made enormous progress, but it has not yet reached the final de-

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(1) Handbook of Sociology. (Ogburn and Nimkoff).

velopment; the sociological phase has not yet crystallised into something clear and definite; the cultural world is still progressing towards a goal, nor is the Australian world static; while it is still in a developmental stage, it is steadily steering its way towards the paradise of cultural illumination.

The philosophical contribution comprises, too, the new problems with their social effects, as they arise in a changing world. Any valuable philosophical thought must be capable of transferring itself into a living philosophy of the people, and of dealing with the principles and deeper questions which individuals and the crowds are thinking about. It is the hunger of the present that must be appeased.

So, too, with the region of the beautiful. Our surroundings are more picturesque, the cities are planned more and more from the standpoint of aesthetic interest; the ugly is being gradually eliminated; the utilitarian is less emphasised; the ornate, displaying taste and tone, is more in favour. The aesthetic impulse in Australia is responsible for its beautiful buildings, its lovely gardens, its charming homes, its suburbs of paradisiacal grandeur, its happy way of life, its keenness for music, its appreciation of literature and art, etc. Religion in Australia interests at least 30 per cent of the people; tolerance is noticeable, respect for another's views and beliefs have secured happiness in the community and humanity in the social life, but strangely enough religion also displays changing forms or restlessness; new church functions and organisations, sect prevalence and lack of unity in religious organisations have their handicaps and their rebellions. The artist, with his small Australian audience requires assistance to surmount the difficulties that fit his particular province; he needs encouragement by the State or by men of taste i.e. patrons, who generously help working artists.

The fundamental thing in any civilisation is its ethical ideal, and in this respect Australia stands high. Nearly (1) all organised religions sanction codes of conduct that guide the individual along the path of rectitude. The ethical ideal gives rise to social organizations. Social institutions are functions of human desires objectified. Institutions whether economic, political, sociological, educational or religious exist, because through them men can secure that their wants are fulfilled. In a democracy the Social institutions reflect the ideals of life possessed by the people, but once formed, the institutions tend to become somewhat conservative; and as man moves on with his ideals, he over-reaches the democracy he built. The idealist

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(1) The Elements of Sociology. (F. J. Wright).

wants one thing, the practical man points out the difficulties that will arise; the former calls for progress, the latter man insists on consolidation. The pragmatist demands efficiency, and an immediate temporary goal; the philosophic soul relies on something that is more permanent. The poets have much to say, but while one contributes his part beautifully, another supplies more pregnant matter, but lacks the form. The artists try different subjects—one paints with artistic subtlety, another succeeds by utilising for his materials the world of things as it is, and as it appears to the eye, while a third turns from surrealism to a painting more closely allied with a realistic interpretation of life.

It will be observed that in Australia, even though the people have been termed material-minded, Philosophy is the driving power at the back of their intellectual, social and aesthetic endeavour. Philosophy is the guide to life; accordingly the life of reason predominates. Philosophy also turns the mind of many of the Australian people to supernatural realities "of so great a richness, and of so rare a treasury, that compared with them, the splendours of earth and sky are paltry". The philosophy actuating the principles of an Australian urges him to lead a life of purpose, service and of culture; he recognises that human progress is an ideal that should be encouraged and that an upright and honest citizen is the noblest work of God and the greatest asset a country possesses. While philosophy upholds the cause of moral principles and the appreciation of ethical values it does not state, however, that every work of art must teach a moral lesson. The artist is neither a direct teacher nor a preacher. If some thing is beautiful in itself, it is unnecessary to ask it to be moral or instructive; the beautiful itself will do its own work and implant its own lesson.

Schoolmasters and schoolmistresses teach their own classes and train their students, yet know that it is quite possible they will never see the result of their labours, nor the outcome of their efforts. In the same way the great men of early Australia accomplished their work and planned for a future continent that the alchemy of time, a sound social philosophy and the experience of years transformed into a region of beauty and a land of promise. The Australian's philosophy has been a practical one on the surface; but it is a liberal philosophy based on morality—a philosophy demanding betterment for the citizens and an ideal that indicated a lofty and inspiring love of humanity.

It was the Australian's liberal philosophy that brought about great political changes, that solved the problem of universal education, that made the State train its own people for leadership, that encouraged—perhaps somewhat half-heartedly at first



—adult education in the community, that provided social education, physical education, household training, the cultural agencies for the people; that emphasised and still stresses the necessity of teaching in the schools appreciation of good art, good music, good literature, especially good literature in which the aesthetic factor is prominent. Today the demand has arisen that a minimum of aesthetic education should be given to all people in the state to unite the artists and the public; in fact, to prepare (1) a public for future artists by habituating them to see things from the point of view of the beautiful, so that what was formerly the spiritual wealth of one, becomes the currency of all.

St. Thomas defined the beautiful as that which gives pleasure on sight (*id quod visum placet*). The beautiful is what gives joy i.e. joy in knowledge. Beauty is essentially the object of intelligence. The natural site of beauty is the intelligible world. "The beautiful (2) relates only to sight and hearing of all the senses, because these two are *maxime cognoscitur*." It might be mentioned here that this view has been criticised as being inadequate. The Australian is interested in the Beautiful from the philosophic point of view: he is pleased by its presentation, since nature has given him so many opportunities of appreciating its display, and so many occasions for admiring its effects. The training of the Australian and the nature of his philosophy fit him in a singular way to be a lover of the beautiful and to favour the aesthetic, for he seeks beyond the facts that he knows, something that has not yet been accomplished—an ideal. He seeks for truth and when a body of truth has been established, he searches further—He goes from truth to truth, from ideal to ideal, from imperfect beauty to perfection. The final stage calls for an aesthetic (3) maturity, and such maturity can only be secured by a continuous comparison of the best works and productions.

The Australian citizen recreates values, or at least he restates them in each social circle found in every generation, thus avoiding the unwholesomeness of stagnant groups, or the dissipation of energy. He adapts himself readily to his environment, but he is not a facile meliorist, nor one casual in things of major moment, and with Von Mueller he believes that his public gardens, his suburban parks, the playgrounds and riverbanks for the people should minister to the aesthetic rather than to the utilitarian; that ideal beauty is the first consideration, and that everything else is subservient to that demand.

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(1) The Lesson in Appreciation. (F. H. Hayward).

(2) Sum Theol. I-II qo. 27, a.1, ad 3.

(3) Place, Taste and Tradition. (Bernard Smith).

Many intelligent lovers of beauty realise that the elements of the spiritual world are strong in Australia—that the fact that “aesthetic appreciation is not a natural sentiment”, makes it essential that the process of building up aesthetic appreciation when taught is one that demands skill and imagination in the teacher, but as the appreciation of beauty can be taught, it should be taught, for art ought to engrain the entire being of young and old, giving them the power of artistic expression without which one’s spirit loses its elasticity and the heart its native buoyancy.

Contemplation and appreciation require for their successful realisation a definite course of training; the experience of a mere series of aesthetic activities is not sufficient, or is quite inadequate in the attainment of any degree of excellence in the contemplative scale. The extension of historical knowledge, the present day interest in art and aesthetics, the easier communication now existing between countries and cultures, making comparative criticism of literary and artistic works easier and more competent, compels art-education to be essential in any progressive community. When philosophy illustrates the wisdom of aesthetic analysis and the value of the experiences that the spirit undergoes in its response to its purgation, it may then be expected that the tree of knowledge in the community will blossom afresh.

### THE PERSONAL CONTRIBUTION.

The political position, as a rule, in a country must be satisfactory, otherwise justice, liberty, freedom and free and informed criticism cannot be considered; the economic outlook secures simplicity or richness according as the tastes of a people differ; the sociological soil represents the social attitude and outlook that characterise the people under review; the psychological factor holds that all true art is inherently spiritual and personal, that all true beauty bears reference to the ethical and ideal, and hence that all real art whether artistic, literary, architectural, is capable of development; the philosophical investigates the nature of the spiritual forces by which the artist has been inspired; the personal aspect or contribution deals with the kind of man who is expected to develop the aesthetic sense; it (1) indicates how the scholar, the amateur or the common sense or wisdom of the ordinary man assumes dictatorship of taste and cultivates Fine Art as the insignia of intellectual aristocracy; it points out clearly that progress in the aesthetic depends on the people concerned—they must be spiritually-minded,

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(1) A Study in Comparative Aesthetics (Colin McAlpin).

critics of the workings of the spirit, participators in the operations of the human soul, and quiet observers of the royal march of human thinking.

The aesthetic expression of a country depends to a great extent on the character of its people, and if Australia has enjoyed any pre-rogatives in this respect, it is mainly due to the calibre and composition of its citizens. The migrants from the British Isles to Australia were a select group; weaklings were excluded, none but the strong and robust, physically and morally—only those gifted with initiative, resource, good health, and romantic ardour, faced the dangers of the distance and braved the trials and terrors incidental to a journey so long, and to a passage so trying as was the case in travelling from England to Australia.

Westgarth in his book gives a glowing description of the people who immigrated, and the charm of high culture and refined manners that characterised the bulk of them. Nathaniel Ogle (F.G.S.) 1839 in his account of Western Australia says: "In point of society, the settlement of Western Australia stands pre-eminent. The high order consists of families well-born and well-educated, and many of them men of rank in the Army and Navy. The elegances of life are sedulously cultivated by them and constitute a distinct feature in their intercourse."

In addition to the early settlers who made their home in Australia, favourable climatic conditions, the possession of good health and strength, the sporting instinct and the life lived for the most part in the open air, were largely responsible for the kindly, genial and hospitable attitude of those who were born in the land of the sunny South.

In many respects the Australian is a paradox—he is earnest, yet he often manifests a nonchalance; he is interested in everyone and everything, yet he displays a negligent *laissez faire* attitude to current problems; at times, he would seem to show indifference to zeal, apathy to devotion, listlessness to endeavour, yet he is always actuated by a fervid patriotic outlook; common sense saves him from being too independent; he readily submits to law and order, he is reasonable in his dealings with others, and although at all times he thirsts for adventure, yet he is tolerant and prudent-minded. He is by nature a sportsman and follows the teaching of the poet, Adam Lindsay Gordon, who taught the sportsman's creed: fearlessness, comradeship, adventure, and the love for the open-air life. The Australian cannot be considered a mystic, nor one prone to metaphysics, but if one is in distress, or

needs help, or is a stranger in the land, then his generosity and cordiality know no limits; he is always ready with a helping hand.

R. W. Dale in his "Impressions of Australia" (1), (1899) says that if he were asked what made the deepest impression on him during his enjoyable visit to some of the Australian Colonies, he would reply that it was the hospitality of the people. "One of the virtues attributed to the people of the New Atlantis is nobly illustrated by the people of the Australian Colonies. The inhabitants of the New Atlantis were not more generous in their treatment of strangers than our Australian kinsmen. The charming homes in which I stayed, the cordial friends I found on the other side of the world will linger long in my memory. The English race under their new conditions of life—social, economic, climatic are rapidly developing a new type of national character. The affection of the Australian for the Old Country is a passion; they surround their homes with flowers and shrubs and trees. Every Englishman that visits Australia comes from "Home", consequently he is doubly welcome to Australia."

As a physical specimen the Australian is tall and strong; he is well-set, muscular, wiry, brave, resourceful, and on the whole good humoured. He walks with vigour and a spring; his mind is active, his nature is sociable, his voice is neither aggressive nor loud. He enjoys a joke; he can be critical, yet he is ready to make allowances for short-comings. He is a good comrade to his fellows, reliable and steadfast in adversity, generous and always keen to encourage another. The Australian's social philosophy is utilitarian, and although he is ever ready to help another he believes that prosperity should be the normal condition of everyone.

"The (1) men and women born in the rural districts are for the most part creatures of fine stature and muscular limbs full of abounding vitality and capable of almost any physical achievement and above all things attached to the soil of their birth." The women too should be canonised for their patriotism, their perseverance, their nobility of character, their moral worth, the high standard they maintained, and the courage with which they played their part in making Australia what it is today—

Not only in the rural districts but from the beginning of the Australian Settlement around Sydney, noble characters and fine types of individuals—men and women, were found on all sides. In 1831, Sydney throbbed with a newer and livelier hope, that came into existence, and its progressive men helped to build

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(1) Impressions of Australia. (R. W. Dale).

up the beginnings of a great country, and to inspire their countrymen with hope and visions of future prosperity. Some assisted the development of their country by work in the fields; others cultivated the soil or advanced the pastoral interest; others again by their labours in the towns, created trade, commerce and industry—all were zealous to better their own condition, and by bettering their own condition, furthered the development of their country. There were always leaders in every section of the community—noble statesmen, professional men, business men, scholars, teachers, artists and the intellectual and cultured elite, whose work, criticism, and literary efforts fostered the ideals of the community and sought to direct the cultural trends of the early inhabitants of the Colonies.

Progress has been written large on the pages of Australian history. As we look around it is noted that Australian education and culture have marched *pari passu* with the external achievements of civilisation. The moral fibre of the people is strong; they are ready to appreciate what is good and of a high standard; they are equally prepared to condemn what is of poor quality, or of inferior material. The Australian displays no inferiority complex; he is practical in his philosophy, willing to lead when necessary, and although he figures prominently in many fields, his success is due to his individualism, rather than to historical claim, for his Commonwealth is not one boasting of century old ruins, ancestral claims and fascinating legends, but it is a land that has taught its children the need for foresight, the necessity of patience, and the wisdom of judicious co-operation.

On the battle field or the scene of war the Australian character was observed at its best. Bravery, determination, initiative, dexterity, strength, sagacity were a few of the things that distinguished him. Dr. Bean in his report of the part played by Australians in the great war wrote: "The Australian troops never lost a position that they were told to hold, and never failed to win a position that they were instructed to attain." It is generally agreed, too, that the Australian soldier never acquired even after four years of service the habit of instant, automatic, sub-conscious response to command—the ideal of the old military system. The soldier from the bush was bred to a habit of decision, while the mind of the city man was more dependent on the wills of those about him.

Australians celebrate important functions with a fair amount of eclat and ceremony; their sporting tendency accords with their social nature. From the time the first advertised wedding took place at Government House, Sydney, May 8th, 1810, when Lt-Colonel O'Connell was married to Mrs. Mary Putland, the

daughter of ex-Governor Bligh or, the account of Dr. John Woolley's lecture at the opening of the Sydney School of Arts (1860), up to the present day, when not only marriages are celebrated with becoming ceremony, and great events are greeted with public holidays, but birthdays, anniversaries, sporting achievements, social gatherings, family reunions, club assemblies, etc., are all chronicled with care in the daily or weekly newspapers. Perhaps the most memorable event ever recorded was the glowing description of the inauguration of the Melbourne International Exhibition held in 1880, when the performance of the opening Cantata was celebrated. The chorus for the occasion consisted of 1,000 voices and an instrumental band of 200 first class performers.

Australia in its early days possessed great heroes and lion-hearted pioneers, famous overlanders, sterling explorers, successful business-men, eminent scientists, geologists, educationists, statesmen, church-men, scholars, etc.—all helped to build up the Australia that flourishes today. The early settlers were succeeded by other men and women equally heroic, enterprising, patriotic and gifted with foresight—scenting from afar the future of their Commonwealth. Gradually the population of the continent increased, the people were zealous for its advancement, and all became greatly concerned in establishing and developing in their country “these ideals (1) where firmness is supreme, never in the shifting world of things, events and material inventions.”

The Australian people compose those who are born in the Commonwealth, and the migrants from overseas, but principally from the British Isles. Some arrive in Australia at an early age, and labour within its shores; some come as visitors and elect to remain. Many travellers from other lands become so enamoured with the character of the country and the prosperity and happiness of the people that they make the new land their home, and become more Australian than the Australians themselves. All people love Australia for the opportunities it presents, for the democratic way of life it provides, for the tolerance it displays, for the sunshine it supplies, for the health and vigour the people enjoy. The Commonwealth gleams (1) in the radiance of the present—it is full of secrets and surprises and futures; it surrenders them willingly to those who make the quest, to those who hold on to the captaincy of their own soul.

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(1) “The Building of Eternal Rome” (E. K. Rand).

## PART TWO: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AESTHETIC.

### CHAPTER SIX.

#### Section One:

#### THE AUSTRALIAN AESTHETIC FIELD.

The Contributory factors considered in Chapters Four and Five aimed at preparing the ground-work and facilitating the way for the study of the Australian Aesthetic Field. The field in this thesis comprises six subjects—literature, art, architecture, music, adult education and personal efficiency; each of these will be reviewed in turn. Chapter Ten deals with Mysticism—the part it plays in the spiritual life and the mystic elements found in Australian Literature. Mysticism belongs more to the field of aestheticism than some of the above, for the mystic believes that the world is well-ordered and that the individual in search for perfection is ever striving upwards to a goal to be attained.

#### AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE.

##### INTRODUCTION.

Australia was the Terra Incognita hidden away and slumbering under sunny skies in the South-East of the world, until it was discovered, as some maintain, in the 17th and 18th centuries. As its history—political, economic, and social could only date from its settlement in 1788, it followed that its literature possessed no age-long tradition in song and story, no glamour of old romance, no historic war-drum echoes to stir the imagination and kindle the literary impulse. Australian literature even lacked the local sources from which to draw its inspiration for its development; myths and legends from an older civilization did not exist, but the plain epic story of pioneering days, the resolute endeavour of its great men to conquer the wilderness, romantic features in the daring exploits of sailors who charted its coast-line, or the brave men who explored its vast inland spaces, or stirring stories of those who founded the first great primary industries of the land, were the main themes that supplied the matter for the building up of its literature.

The material for Australia's literary development was not available from the commencement of its history, most of its great events happened at various intervals between the years 1790 and 1861, but the stories of them which provided the literature of the country, did not appear until a later date; in fact, it is only in recent years that writers have attempted to render full justice to the episodes, and to describe adequately and appreciatively the story of the early Australian pioneers, heroes, builders, statesmen, etc.—the men who met the chal-

lenge of the environment, and experienced the dynamic stimulus of the new ground, the blows and pressures associated with a new settlement.

Australians during the years 1790-1861, were by no means isolated from all literature, and deprived of the great treasures of the intellect, for, like Canada, the continent enjoyed from its settlement, the spiritual resources recorded in books and magazines, in social philosophies and literary productions, in the artistic works, etc., provided by Europe, for Australian literature had an English parentage, and the culture of England was the culture that was transplanted to the Southern Settlement.

Circumstances in early Australia made it difficult for any form of literature, art, education, or even religion to develop. The method of government, the quality of the people, the general attitude to established authority, the feeling of isolation were all obstacles that barred its development. The policy of one class of the people of the Settlement was punitive; the free settlers with their courage, resource, and determination to subdue the soil and make it productive had little opportunity for literary achievements. Finally, the new country presented problems so materially different from those in the home-land, that the solution of them operated against any progress in the realm of literature.

When the first products of Australia's literary pioneers appeared, the poems revealed a melancholy note; the novels since they were published in England were prized for the unusual they described, the exotic characters with which they dealt, and the themes that satisfied the curiosity of those who followed the fortunes of Botany Bay. Every book was published with an English public in view, and only those were produced that suited the demand of the over-sea market.

Writers from Great Britain who decided to live in Australia, or who merely paid its shores a friendly visit, were rarely carried away by the vivid description of an Australian landscape; seldom did they seem to be influenced by an appreciation of the natural beauties around—the glory of the sunshine, the beauty of the bush, the marvels of the ever-green and never changing forest, the colour in the gum, the aroma in the wattle, etc.—these made no appeal to them; “they (1) missed the oak and the elm trees, the scented hawthorn and the nightingale, and coming from regions of fog and mist, the bright sunlight dazzled them with its glare. Like the Jews by the waters of Babylon, they possessed poor hearts for song; all the romance of life and the beauty of its existence were in the country they had left.”



Although the working class and its problems, the national endeavour and its phases, had little interest for writers and visitors who landed on the Australian shores to seek material for their books, yet the first authentic expression of Australian literature, strangely enough came from the poets, who wrote and sang of the shearer, the drover, the boundary-rider, the small settler, etc. The balladist (1) followed, and "as they caught the phases of contemporary life, they sang the epics of the sun-downer, the bush, the outback, so feelingly and so accurately, that their songs were memorised and recited on every station, shearing shed, camp and wayside inn of the Australian inland."

Some early writers, however, were not so enthusiastic about their land of adoption, and they wrote descriptions of their new land and described incidents that happened more to appeal to people in England than to be of use to the people of Australia. The first books, like Dr. Lang's "Historical and Statistical Account of New South Wales", (1834) were published in England. The books were English in outlook and sympathy and indicated decided subservience to English Letters and Culture. the Australian poetry, when published, read "like (2) the poetry of exiles; the matter was often morbid, the tone foreign, the style lacking in elegance".

The early Australian Colonists were so absorbed in the struggle for existence, in the cultivation of the soil, in the rearing of their flocks and herds, that they had little time for spiritual experiences or cultural pursuits. In many cases they lacked the means of comfort; often they were without the necessary elements of labour; they rarely enjoyed the pleasures of regulated leisure and the usual amenities of life, but they possessed courage, industry, and perseverance, they were men of character and in many cases of education. They were strong men, tough-textured fine physical specimens, fitted by natural aptitudes for colonisation; above all, they were noble souls—great men who bore bravely the burdens of humanity, or fought for their rights when necessary.

As literature is enlightening matter concerning human beings, human hearts, and human thoughts, dealing wholly with man and the mind of man, little opportunity for its encouragement exists when problems of economic interest in a country are uppermost; when efforts at survival occupy men's minds, when virgin forests and wide-open plains are to be

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(1) The Development of Australian Literature. (H. G. Turner and A. Sutherland).

(2) Ibid.

conquered and cultivated. The early settlers had rare conquests to make, formidable enemies to subdue and control; the practical matters of life left little time for the enjoyment of the sunshine or for the serenity of the shadow; the new environment gave them no opportunity for realising that Australia was "The (1) Sleeping Beauty of the World's desire." Literature, according to Emerson is "a record of the best thoughts", or according to another author, "the most impressive utterance of the world's best minds". How then can it develop in a country, where there is sorrow or troubles or harsh circumstances to withstand?

Australia's early years—from its foundation in 1788 to 1861 was not a period when song-birds arose, when creators of fiction presented matter for an interested public to enjoy, or that great writers conveyed an endless number of eternal truths for the use and enrichment of human life.

Literature requires peace and prosperity, freedom and encouragement. Like pictorial art and music, it is one of the recognised resources for the gladdening of life and the widening of its possibilities. Association, a reading public, an appreciative audience and a critical minority, represent some of the helps it needs for its furtherance and development to make it aesthetically satisfactory.

When the first Australian poets tried their hand, it was noticed that the feelings aroused by grappling with the harsh soil and the difficult environment, indicated a touch of sadness and a tone of melancholy in what they wrote, but when the environment was conquered, the memory of the home land dimmed, and the prejudices of the past erased, an appreciation of things Australian and a national tradition were observed—a tradition that reflected, and will yet further reflect, the life of the Australian people and their place in the social structure.

When the Australian literature began to develop, it did not propose to supplant English literature and culture, but its service aimed at supplementing and "perchance in minor departments in replacing the magnificent body of writing to which the Australian people were heirs". It was content to follow English models, and to patronise the writers of other lands, until such time as it could develop its own tradition and aesthetic.

The first attempts at poetry and prose in Australia were, according to A. Sutherland, crude efforts, e.g., "The First Fruits of Australian Poetry" by Barron Fields, published privately in

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(1) "The Bush." (Bernard O'Dowd).

Sydney, 1819. (1) The poem according to the critic alluded to, was hopelessly deficient in every attribute of true poetry. Marian Phillips, however, regarded the work as extremely humorous. This poem and a few others, were, in fact, as one writer says "the mere scraping at the fiddle strings before the concert begins"; the full rich music was to come at a much later date, when the writers gave themselves up wholly to the study of community life and its ethical implications, when the national note began to be stirred, and the development of its literature enabled its writers and poets to say to its people things which others could not hear: messages that appealed particularly to an Australian audience. Furthermore, some of the writers showed that they were poets of mankind, rather than those of a people of one country.

The volumes of prose and verse that had emerged in Australia previous to 1875 received little notice outside those circles that were immediately concerned, but about 1880, the first great International Exhibition held in Melbourne, attracted visitors and attention from all parts of Europe; the success of cricketing teams visiting England, the opulence and expenditure of Australian excursionists to the Mother land; the efforts of D. B. W. Sladen and H. Patchett Martin—the former with the poets, and the latter with the novelists, did much to increase England's interest in Australia, and to welcome the Australian to English Society and to membership of its clubs.

The output of Australian Literature from 1880-1910, was extraordinary for so young a country. In 1910, Mr. Fox (2) estimated that forty major and 400 minor poets catered for a population of four and a half million people. In Bonwick, Rusden, Jenks, Jose, Bean and Scott, capable historians presented to the Australian public books worthy of other lands in spite of the want of a picturesque background. Works of exploration were not unknown, while the writers of fiction were numerous and capable. Some novelists born in Australia went to Europe and produced work outside their home-land, for writers are human beings, and must follow the market to make their genius bud.

The Australian culture and the development of its literature, its aesthetic structure and its aesthetic appeal had a foundation in 1880. The Bulletin era helped the development from 1890, while several influences of various types and contributions from many sources united in the work of building

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(1) The Development of Australian Literature (H. G. Turner and A. Sutherland).

(2) Australia. (Frank Fox).

up the new Australian national sentiment and tradition. The outcome was almost akin to the formation of a new civilisation, with the result that the race that emerged differed widely in habits, modes of thought and ways of expression from the British type. The political, social, and religious outlook was quite different from those people who were their ancestors in the home-land. The settlers who came from the British Isles brought with them the traditional methods of British organisation, resulting in an outgrowth of British communities, but in a short time, due to climatic influences, geographical factors, psychological agencies, political progress, social conditions, and a certain philosophic aura of freedom, peace, and prosperity, an Australian national spirit dominated everything. In 1890 the nationalistic seed displayed definite signs of growth; in 1900, when the idea of Federation was set in motion, the nationalistic roots struck deep. The cry of "One people, one destiny", or "One nation for one continent", "One continent for one people", indicated that the national pulse was beating; subsequent events under Federation, and two great wars, showed that the pulse beat was vigorous, regular and healthy. The literature, too, re-echoed confident notes; there was in it a consciousness (1) of manhood, a feeling of maturity. The work produced indicated the possession of a speculative idealism, an eager hopefulness, an aesthetic ideal. The audience, too, increased with the introduction of national themes.

Australia from the beginning of its political foundation made the most of her natural resources, winning gold from her mines, wealth from her fleeces and stability from her agriculture. From 1880 she developed a young nationhood and cultivated those arts associated with Democracy. From 1900, an Australian Literature presented itself to the world—a literature with lofty ideals, fine workmanship, superior themes: the poetry and prose reflecting the special features of the age became the channel for the highest intellectual and emotional expression. The artistic work was decidedly Australian in character, but the outlook had a world-wide significance.

The poetry of Australia is its most representative literary creation. Poetry is primarily music: superior to music only, because it sends the mind travelling to even more magical islands than music. Like music and painting, poetry demands not only knowledge in its audience, but also imagination and sensitiveness: in a word, culture. If Australia has specialised in poetry, it necessarily presupposes the presence of culture in its midst, for poetry will not be read, cultivated, and appreciated; there will be no desire to secure the highest quality

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(1) Modern Australian Literature. (Nettie Palmer).

and subject matter of the noblest character, unless the audience exists to approve of and enjoy the great treasures of human thought and experience.

The reader of Australian poetry readily recognises the richness of phrase, the picturesqueness of expression, the elusive joyous exuberance that characterises it, and makes it different from the creations of other nations. The foreign critic and the student of Australian poetry readily admit that much of it makes an aesthetic appeal; some poems they discover are works of art, even though the flight into the alluring regions of poetry and romance was made by people, whose enjoyment of the muse was a sort of side-excursion. Australia, so far, has had no Robert Burns, no Browning, no Wordsworth, but she has done sufficient to show her imaginative and intellectual bent. Her poets respond in an ever-swelling chorus to the ever-deepening sense of the vastness of the country, and the greatness of its destiny. If its educated people seek aesthetic delight from the muse, the ordinary men find it in their hearts. To all people, Henry Kendall and Victor J. Daley are sweet singers of love and beauty—poets who peer into the eternal mysteries; to every reader, the Ballads of E. J. Brady, and the patriotic work of Bernard O'Dowd make a strong appeal. Henry Lawson with his poetic stories, (Banjo) Paterson as a balladist, J. Shaw Neilson and Mary Gilmore with their lyrics, and many others are singers that find admirers abroad as well as in Australia.

## AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE.

### PART 1.—THE INITIAL STAGE.

When Australian Literature began is a matter of doubt. Some associate it with the first works written in New South Wales; others, hesitating to ascribe the term Literature to the early efforts and first blossoms of its writers, date it from the year 1860, when her poets became more vocal and her writers more representative of the new conditions and varied interests associated with the development of early Australia.

H. M. Green (1) divides the history of Australian Literature into five periods, but for the purposes of this thesis, three groups suffice—the initial stage up to 1860; the developmental (1860-1900); the Federation Period (1900-1948). The first stage represents the foundation and the pioneering period; the second the dawning of the national growth, the third and final—the Commonwealth as it exists at the present time.

The first stage was a realistic one, economic considerations and political issues coloured the second period; while the final one represents the aesthetic phase, where Australian beliefs, aspirations, ideals, and a sense of what is most beautiful in life dominate the aim of the writer, or make him wish to secure for all an harmonious, rich, and unified way of life.

Although three stages of literature are here mentioned the reader must understand that this thesis is not a history of Australian Literature; it is merely a reference to a few writers who represented a definite development in the different periods, and those who were in the writer's opinion contributors to Australia's aesthetic.

The initial stage in Australian Literature was somewhat crude, strange and harsh; a tone of grim irony appeared to pervade it; little or no attention was given to aesthetic effects. Most of the writers had been born in the Mother Country, and in their work displayed the traditions and sentiments of their home-land. Some again, were a little unbalanced in mind, since fate imposed upon them an unhappy career, or, perhaps, they felt like exiles, and viewed the new surroundings with dissatisfaction, and accordingly were unable to accommodate themselves to the new obligations and the better conditions of life presented to them in Australia.

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(1) "An Outline of Australian Literature" (H. M. Green).

Notwithstanding the difficulties arrayed against the initial development of Australian literature, the formative machinery was at work and results in several fields were noticeable. Several histories were written, a few treatises appeared, several newspapers found sufficient support to justify their existence for a few years, and poets here and there indicated that they were willing to make poetry a representative literary creation.

Lt-Colonel David Collins, who sailed with Governor Phillip in the first fleet and was the first Australian judge, became also its first historian, by publishing his most valuable work called "An Account of the Colony of New South Wales". This history published in 1798, was considered a national work. In 1801, he published a second volume. Collins was also a poet of some importance for we find that he poetised the foundation of Sydney. Among Australia's earliest poets were Michael Robinson, who was eventually made Australia's first and only real poet-laureate; Barron Field, a supreme court judge, who printed privately (1819), "The First Fruits of Australian Poetry"; and Charles Thompson, the first Australian-born poet in 1826 published "Wild Notes from the Lyre of a Native Minstrel"—a long poem of 348 lines in blank verse. Seven copies of this poem are still extant. Thompson died in 1883 at the age of 76. Lionel Michael, a lawyer, showed a refinement of taste in "Songs without Music" published about 1857. One of the first poems written by an Australian, while he was in England was W. C. Wentworth's "Australasia", (1821) a work that issued a call to a worthy child of song.

"Still gracious power, some kindly soul inspire,  
To wake to life my country's unknown lyre."

Twenty-three years passed before the unknown lyre responded to Wentworth's inspiration in the person of Charles Harpur (1817-1868). There were other poets and minor prose writers up to 1860, but with the exception of Harpur the literature judged by the best standards was not-worthy, neither in quantity nor in quality. Many causes were responsible for the immature development.

In Governor Macquarie's time, the free immigrants constituted only one fifth of the population. Local newspapers had the greatest difficulty in existing. Out of nine (1) papers that were published before 1850, only one remained. The more the paper was Australian in sentiment, the more surely was it doomed to failure. In matters of thought and art, Great Britain swayed the Colony. Most of the books and magazine read in New South Wales were the products from the English market. G. B. Barton estimated that in 1865, New South Wales

imported English reviews, magazines and miscellaneous matter to the value of £10,000; and books worth £50,000. At that time the population was only 400,000. Little opportunity under such conditions existed for the development of the Australian aesthetic, but the contribution of Charles Harpur can be considered as possessing such a value, for the more carefully his work is read, the more it is realised that it was of a high standard and of a rare quality.

Charles Harpur, a schoolmaster's son living in the Hawkesbury district, was an Australian by birth, sentiment and characteristics. He was born according to official records in 1813 but Harpur maintained that it was in 1817. (2) G. B. Barton, the historian, wrote of him "He may justly claim the honour of having laid the foundation of our national poetry." Another critic—a writer in *The Colonial Monthly* was not so enthusiastic about him. "Harper," he wrote, "is self-taught self-relying, self-contained. He lacks learning, fancy, mobility—no trace of wit or humour exists in his work, his ear lacks variety, sometimes even music. He fails to respond to the broadening of outlook, and the wider view which training would give him." Notwithstanding such severe criticism, it was Harpur's ambition to become a poet worthy of the land he loved—to be the "bard of his Country" or the Muse's "First high-priest in its bright Southern Clime."

It is not denied that Harpur was mainly a self-taught man, but as he passed most of his early life in the solitude of the bush, he learned the great secrets of nature and became a believer in humanity and the future of the race. In his twenties he secured a clerical position in the Public Service Office, and immediately devoted all his leisure to literary pursuits. At the age of 26, he went to live near Singleton. There he married and had children. Before going to Singleton he became friendly with Sir Henry Parkes, and he remained his friend for thirty years.

Harpur's first publication in 1845 entitled "Thoughts", was only a small volume of sixteen pages and contained 22 sonnets. The author inscribed on one of his books "To Mrs. Clarinda Parkes with the author's best wishes, for the welfare of herself and family—a slight token for much kindness received at her hands". Charles Harpur and Sir Henry Parkes, although men as dissimilar as it was possible to be, were great friends. They found a mutual interest in poetry, and they loved to discuss its value. Other poems by Harpur were

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(1) *The R.H.S. Journal*, XXV, Page 114.

(2) Charles Harpur, June 1937, *R.A.H.S. Journal*.



"The Poet's Home" (1862), a lyric poem giving a beautiful picture of the joys of simple country life; "The Bushranger", published in 1853—a play in five acts including his best poem "The Creek of the Four Graves". The play as a play is a poor production, but the poem is a long one in blank verse, and reads like a well-composed story, while the poetry is of a high standard and contains some beautiful passages. "The Creek of the Four Graves", tells the story of five men who went out into the wilds in search of new cattle country, and who with one exception were all killed by the blacks, while they were asleep at their camp.

Two other poems by Harpur possessing merit are "The Bush Fire" and "Ned Connor". In 1865, "The Tower of Dream" appeared. "A Midsummer Noon in the Australian Forest" is one of his happily-chosen lyrics, a poem which illustrates his great love of the scenic splendours of his Country. In 1883 a fine collection of Harpur's poems was published, and this collection is today an avenue available to peruse the poet's work. The publication contains a rare range of poems, sonnets, and lyrics. In 1899 and in 1944, his poems were again published but unfortunately his sonnets in both cases were omitted.

Harpur (1) is important in the history of Australian Literature, more as an influence than as a source. His search after culture leavened the ideals of Henry Parkes, and other politicians, and he established a tradition that verse-writing at least, was a public work, and poets a class to be sustained in need by Government benefaction. Harpur was a vital stimulus to a real poet—Henry Kendall, who wrote of him:—

"I would sit at your feet for long days,  
To hear the sweet muse of the wild  
Speak out through the sad and passionate rays  
Of her first and her favourite child."

Sutherland writing in the Melbourne Review, 1888, says of Harpur's sonnets, that they are as elegant and as finished as any in the English language. "Enthusiastic (1) admirers dubbed him the Australian "Wordsworth", but although his strength lay in that communing with nature which marked the "Lake School", his somewhat deficient education and his limited range of language, prevented his attaining the success which his ambition essayed. He shaped his Muse in various forms, sonnet, ballad and lyric, but his strength lay in blank verse." Harper died of consumption in 1868. He called his youngest daughter Araluen named after the town where he

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(1) A. W. Jose.

was Gold Commissioner after his failure on a sheep farm. Kendall also called his first born daughter Araluen—probably as a tribute to one whom he greatly admired, for if we except Harpur, the Muse of New South Wales slumbered until Kendall came on the scene.

The initial stage of Australian Literature was thus a restricted one, and with the exception of Harpur, genuine poetic aspiration and cultured poetic insight were lacking in almost all those who wished to have their work catalogued as Australian Poetry. However, from 1860 the national character was taking shape; Freedom (3) of the Press and Trial by Jury were secured; the Cessation of transportation brought about a new condition of things; the beginning of representative government and the desire for national education, showed that the young colony lacked nothing in vigour, courage and sane ideals. Wisdom and foresight were responsible for laying the foundations of those liberties and privileges that the people of a later generation so highly prized, and those events were mostly responsible for making the second period of Australian Literature one of self-possession, heeding features that were nationalistic, creative, interesting and such as to find for Australian writers a world audience.

Australia was to show according to A. W. Jose that it was something more than a collection of strange creatures—"weird (1) and grotesque"; that its writers, unhappy and unbalanced in mind, chose unusual themes for their subject matter, but that they dealt with the common interests in life; that poetry had ideals and was a living thing, but that subjective (2) poetry—the poetry of human effort, sentiment and passion, is the same in its essentials in all countries and in all ages, changing simply its verbal vesture with its surroundings, while objective poetry varies with the landscape, the society, the environment. What makes one gloomy or lonely, gives another imagination and fires his soul.

It could be added, also, that the aesthetic effects of literature began to receive attention and merit consideration from the year 1860. The aesthetic of Harpur was not without its impression on the taste of his admirers.

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(1) The Development of Australian Literature. (H. G. Turner and A. Sutherland).

(2) The Australian Art Review, Sept 1899. (J. G. De Libra)

(3) (The R.A.H. Journal, Vol. XXV).

**THE SECOND PERIOD (1860-1900).**

The Second period represented a distinct advance on the first one—in poetry, in the novel, in the newspapers, and in literature generally. Following Charles Harpur one noticed an interesting group of poets including Sir Henry Parkes, J. D. Lang, James L. Michael, William Forster, Henry Kendall, Adam Lindsay Gordon and others. During the second period, Marcus Clarke, Rolf Boldrewood, Henry Kingsley, Ada Cambridge and a few others were responsible for the development of the Australian novel.

The newspapers, too, were more numerous and influential; their quality was of a superior type, their aims were nobler, they tended to raise the cultural and intellectual standard of their readers. Magazines and periodicals were even more plentiful during this second period of literary evolution than they are today. In Victoria, after 1855, efforts were made to establish a good magazine devoted to literature, science, and art, as a means of bringing together those who were not too absorbed in the city mart, nor too occupied in the Stock Exchange. From 1855-1890, there were fourteen different magazines in existence; some lasted two months, others two years. One weathered the storm for six years, another for ten years. All the magazines were bona fide attempts to provide a good class of reading matter for the public. They were all well printed, while the writers, who contributed to their columns, gave to the readers matter deserving attention, and articles worthy of consideration. The two Chief Magazines in Victorian History were the *Victorian Review*—a monthly, and the *Melbourne Review*—a quarterly. The latter dealt with the social, political, and intellectual life of the Colony and its articles were always of a high literary standard.

The poets, novelists, artists, historians, etc., who figured in the second period represented the literary output of all the Australian Colonies. W. Marcus wrote "*South Australia, its History, Resources and Production*", (1876); W. Westgarth in 1888, published "*Personal Recollections of Early Melbourne*"; James Bonwick published about fifty books in all, mostly dealing with historical matter. G. W. Rusden wrote his voluminous "*History of Australia*", while Julian Tenison Woods with his "*History of the Discovery and Exploration of Australia*" (1865), was another of the many, who enriched the literary production of the land under the Southern Cross. New South Wales was the colony where most literary work was produced, and prior to 1850, only a few books dealt with Victoria. With odd exceptions whatever book was published, appeared first in

England, e.g. "Impressions of Australia Felix", by Richard Howitt—a book which gave an account of his four years' residence in the colony.

Pamphlets—social, political and theological appeared frequently on the tables and counters of the book-shops and judging by their number, and the variety of subjects dealt with, they must have appealed to a wide circle of eager readers. William Westgarth compiled six volumes of great interest in England, while Professor C. H. Pearson's "National Life and Character", was for a time regarded as one of the Australian classics. Even to this day, it can be read with pleasure and interest.

Tasmania, Queensland and Western Australia also had their writers—some with the historical bent, others happy to convey their thoughts in poetical lines, others again, keen to describe the things they saw and the experiences that fell to their lot, wrote novels, or attempted works replete with mellow wisdom on the central problems of education, life and art. A few like Baron Von Mueller considered themselves as Australian-minded and confined their researches and interests to no particular part of the continent, but sought to raise the spiritual, scientific and aesthetic standards of a young developing country.

School-masters, journalists, church-men, statesmen, laymen, students and professors helped to adorn the literary field, but the professors of the two universities—Sydney and Melbourne made contributions that were of great assistance to scholars and disciples. Early Australia owes a great debt to Professor Woolley, who lectured so willingly and contributed articles to the papers so inspiring, that they gave readers the impression of what constituted culture and the true aesthetic quality. Professor M. P. Pell of the Sydney University, who was also an actuary of the A.M.P. Society, and drafted its first table of Premium rates for endowment assurances—a table which remained in force until 1900, made valuable contributions to the literature of mathematics. In Melbourne, the literary productions of some of its early professors—e.g., Hearn, McCoy, Tucker, Morris and Nanson, each in a different field, were considerable and most beneficial, while Charles Badham of Sydney University, whom Grote described as the greatest of living scholars, and Baldwin Spencer a leading Victorian anthropologist, became names of significance in the world of scholarship.

The second phase in Australian literary history has been termed the period of Gordon (1), Kendall and Marcus Clarke. To this trinity of names was later on added Paterson and Lawson, and a poet or two on the red page of the Bulletin, but other names like Henry Kingsley, Rolf Boldrewood, Louis Becke, Ethel Turner, Marriot Watson, etc., could be included with equal advantage; the last five figured in the field of fiction, while men like John Sandes, Victor Daley, E. J. Brady, John Farrell, Le Gay Brereton and George Essex Evans enjoyed a poetic reputation for the style that characterised them, (*le style, c'est l'homme*), the quality of mind they displayed and the way they expressed themselves. Their poems dealt with real Australian life, work, and thought, and what they wrote was always informative, realistic and interesting, e.g., "Women of the West," by G. E. Evans.

#### HENRY KENDALL.

The two poets to make the greatest impression during the second period were Henry Kendall and Adam Lindsay Gordon. It is possible that Gordon is the greater favourite, but Kendall as a poet was better and represented the aesthetic side of literature better than the other. Kendall was born in 1841, and spent his childhood in the country. The Clarence River district was the place where he passed most of his boyhood, but he left it when a young man to seek in Sydney a notable literary fame. During his stay in Sydney he met N. D. Stenhouse, at that time the recognised patron of literature, who allowed him to interest himself in his fine library at his home in Balmain. Stenhouse introduced Kendall to Harpur, then the only true poet of Australia, to D. H. Deniehy—the most cultured of its prose writers, and to Dr. Woolley, the genial and scholarly principal of the new Sydney University through whose instrumentality he was able to make use of the University Library. Kendall's style at first was moulded to an extent on that of Edgar Allan Poe—a style not too satisfactory, for too much sweetness soon produces a surfeit; the sickly wailing leads to irritation and one's sympathy becomes alienated. As Kendall matured with more practice, and with wider reading, his poetry improved, and in 1862 he collected forty-five of his poems and published them under the title of "Songs and Poems". Mr. G. B. Barton in his book "Poets and Prose Writers of New South Wales" (1866) spoke highly of Kendall's poetry and said *inter alia*: "The lyrics Kendall has written are by far the finest yet produced in Australia."

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(1) An outline of Australian Literature. (H. M. Green).

Kendall's life was not a happy one—misfortunes dogged his early years owing to home difficulties. When he married in Sydney he was for two years very happy, as he worked in the civil service; but when he left Sydney to join the literary elite and gain the Parnassian laurels in the Southern Capital he found it difficult to earn a living in the congenial pursuit of letters, even though at that time Melbourne was more important than Sydney, and enjoyed a great name for its literary activity. When Kendall arrived in Melbourne he was met by some literary friends, for his fame had preceded him, and for some weeks everything in his social and literary garden blossomed: Geo. Robertson agreed to publish his poems; admission to the Yorick Club was secured, then an entirely literary confraternity, and there he met Gordon, Marcus Clarke, McCrae, Telo, Horne, Shillinglow and others; fellow-artists who recognised his ability and received him cordially to their circle.

However, Kendall was not happy in Melbourne; disappointment and poverty fell to his lot; the influence of drink told its tale; the death of his daughter, Araluen caused him profound grief, and he returned to Sydney—poor, helpless, an outcast. (Sir) Henry Parkes came to his rescue; the Fagan Brothers gave him the position of accountant and paymaster at their mill at Campden Haven, 200 miles north from Sydney, and there for eight years, up to the time he was made Inspector of Forests by Sir Henry Parkes in 1881, he worked at the mill, and those years were the happiest of his life. The forests around him, the abundance of cedar trees in the neighbourhood, the woodland scenery and the rural setting, kept him away from the city, saved him from idle companions and alcoholic temptations and removed him from moody reflections. With his family around him, and his interest in writing poetry stimulated by correspondence with Marcus Clarke, Brunton Stephens, W. B. Dalley, Philip Holdsworth, Robert Wisdom, Henry Parkes, George Gordon McCrae, and others, he led a full, interesting and profitable life.

Kendall died in 1882—a year after his appointment to his satisfactory position. The poet was only 43 at the time of his death but looked very much older; a careless life had undermined his constitution; sadness, a moody manner, and unwise ceaseless introspection, had aged him before his time.

It might be asked why Kendall is liked as a poet, and the answer is because he painted with exquisite beauty the charms of nature as they are seen in Australia. His poetic artistry enabled him to describe what others failed to observe. He is regarded now as the sweet singer of Australia. He had a

soundness of word sense; his vocabulary was rich, his image-raising feature marked, his power of suggestion remarkably strong.

Many of his poems were composed as he sat in the Sydney Domain, or as he walked through the Botanical Gardens, or as he sat on Mrs. Macquarie's chair, and quietly watched and drank in the charm of the Sydney Harbour, and the unspoiled beauty of Garden Island. At Camden Haven he often wandered into the bush with his children and composed lines as he spied a rare beauty of bend in the river or when the forest gave his fancy a poetical idea.

Kendall's mission was to make Australians appreciate the beauty found in their own land. As he was saturated with the spirit of its scenery, and immersed in the majesty and grandeur of its forests, and the radiant loveliness of its rivers, he passed all such features through the alembic of his poetic soul and they became suffused with beauty, as he turned them into lines of poetic loveliness. Kendall with his poetry sought to nationalise the Australian people; he helped to develop an Australian culture by showing the Australians that beauty was to be found in its inland, that it possessed treasures in its birds, its forests, its scenery, its aborigines, its place-names, and even for people there was beauty in their philosophy of life.

Beneath the influence of Australian woods, hills, plains, and rivers Kendall's soul expanded whether he dealt with wasteland, ocean or forest; he never lacked an appropriate train of thought that harmonised with its tone and character, but Kendall's message was a sad one—sad as his own life:

To his aching eyes  
 "Phantom streams were in the distance, mocking lights of  
 lake and pool;  
 Ghosts of trees of soft green lustre, groves of shadows deep  
 and cool."

To him was not entrusted the message of joy; he dwelt in "embalmed darkness." In his work one misses the joyous radiant air of light and peace, the cheerfulness of a richly endowed nature; he obtrudes on the reader too much of his disappointments, his troubles, the sorrows that afflicted his life, the perished purposes that checked his career.

In his second volume, 1869, Kendall is seen at his best; in "Rose Lorraine", and in "September in Australia", he shows that he has mastered his art, but in "Songs from the Mountains" (1880) he established his fame. It is only when the words of another poet are read, particularly one like Judith Wright, whose poetry savours of the truly intellectual touch, that we

realise the effect Kendall has on an audience—how he illustrates the essentials of great poetry—clarity, beauty, music, understandableness and the desire the reader feels to memorise the lines, e.g., "Bell-birds", and "Song to the Hills". Kendall's poetry has a refining aesthetic effect. In his quest for beauty, his poetry transmutes all that it touches.

Kendall according to A. W. Jose looked upon the bush as a refuge from the human companionship, he at times disliked. His status as a poet was assured by the London Hall-mark in 1862 and this hall-mark gave him such a standing, that for some years, a long succession of fervent poets copied his metres and imitated his mannerisms.

Sainte-Beuve once wrote "Whatsoever is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling is a source of sublimity." Some of Kendall's poems more than stir the emotions. W. H. O. Smeaton places Kendall among the most sublime of Australia's singers, the facile princeps of its poets. Frank Hutchinson wrote "From his first note to his last, Australia was to Kendall, what nature was to Wordsworth—all in all". From the first bright days of Kiama to the dark of Camden Haven—he was the sworn knight of the muse of Australia". Some maintain that his poetry is distinctly Australian—but strangely enough a search of his poems does not reveal praise or blame of Australian flower, or bloom; he had no eyes to see, nor heart to feel, the beauty before his very eyes. The profuseness and beauty of our indigenous flowers surprised and captivated the first discoverers of the continent; it is then strange that our early poets failed to appreciate the floral forests around them and register their ideals of beauty and loveliness in the production of other lands.

The second period contained a literary critic—D.H. Deniehy, whom Professor Cowling styled the Hazlitt of Australian Literature, and another authority put him on an equal footing with De Quincey. Deniehy died at an early age, before his aesthetic had time to influence his contemporaries and his successors. Deniehy knew what constituted supreme excellence in poetry and he showed also that he had a fine discrimination in poetical expression. His appearance in New South Wales was clearly a direct gift from heaven. Although Deniehy greatly impressed his admirers and dazzled his contemporaries with the brilliance of his intellectual gifts, yet it is considered that he belongs to the receptive order of intellect. The creative order is the highest given to man, but it differs in degree from the receptive—on only one man in a generation is such a divine gift bestowed, e.g. Shakespeare, Milton, Scott, Coleridge, Tennyson.



**ADAM LINDSAY GORDON.**

Adam Lindsay Gordon was perhaps more popular with Australians generally than Henry Kendall by reason of the activities that absorbed his attention and the romance that clung to his name. He was born in England in 1833 and spent his boyhood there, but at the age of twenty, influenced by the quest for gold on the Australian fields he made Australia his home, and its interests his interests. When he arrived at Adelaide in 1853, he joined the mounted police, and remained a trooper for two years. A period followed in which he devoted himself to horse-breeding. In 1865 he became a member of the South Australian parliament, but two years later forsook the legislature for the racing field and became an ardent turf follower, with a pronounced liking for horses and the keenest aspirations for success on the steeple-chase course.

Horse-racing, the prize-ring, and sporting events gave direction to his muse and he wrote many poems, some short—others long, dealing with cup-winners, racing events, winning tips, but he wrote also of moods, and now and then he presented the world with a little of his personal philosophy. Lines like:

“Question not, but live in honour,  
Till your goal be won,  
Helping every feeble neighbour,  
Seeking help from none:  
Life is mostly froth and bubble,  
Two things stand like stone:  
Kindness in another's trouble  
Courage in your own.”

give an expression of Gordon's views of the fellowship needed by everyone. Gordon's life although so full of adventure was not a happy, nor a successful one. He was a bad business manager, too variable in his moods in dealing with others, too eager to pursue another interest, before he had made a success of the one to which he first gave his attention.

His literary aspirations, however, were always strong, but misfortunes checked his career. When he decided to live in Melbourne he made the acquaintance of George Higinbotham, an eminent jurist and later on the Chief-justice of Victoria and Gordon was given the run of a fine library. He also became friendly with Marcus Clarke and was invited to contribute to the Colonial Monthly—a magazine that Marcus Clarke edited, and in 1868 some of Gordon's poems appeared in its pages, among them was the “Sick Stockrider.” Gordon was happy when writing, but living in Melbourne necessitated

expense and he was compelled to continue his racing to earn money even though he finally disliked the racing game. While he lived at Brighton, he appeared to be happy, but acute economic burdens weighed down his spirit and militated against his success. Gordon became pessimistic; it is possible that a physical ailment was responsible for his fatalism and his gloomy view of life, and for the sad end for which his philosophy (1)—the outcome of an individual peculiarity and a want of mental balance, was responsible. The full beauty of Gordon's poetry, the ring of sincerity that characterised it, the charms and emotions that his lines aroused are features not easily forgotten. His verses have touched the multitude and his poems are still recited in club and committee, in wool-shed and beer-parlour, in concert halls and public gatherings, in social and literary assemblies. The Gordon Societies established everywhere are alert to keep his memory green, and even in Westminster Abbey, a statue in his honour proves that he is a national figure.

It is not necessary to mention all the poets of the second period, or to give full particulars of more than a few—it suffices to record the names of five others, whose contributions to literature entitled them to rank high in the literary firmament—J. Brunton Stephens of Queensland, who is regarded as a great singer and a strong influence for culture; George Gordon McCrae, a poet of sweetness and polish; William Gay, a Bendigo sonnet writer; R. H. Horne, who remained for seventeen years in Melbourne and gathered around him a number of writers to found the Yorick Club; and finally J. Farrell, whose "Dominion of Australia", was a noble forecast of the Commonwealth to come.

The Second period moreover, was particularly rich in fiction. Among the writers we note Henry Kingsley, who wrote *Geoffry Hamlyn* (1862) and *"The Hillyars and the Burtons"* (1865); Marcus Clarke, who wrote *"For the Term of His Natural Life"*, (1888); Rolf Boldrewood, the writer of *"Melbourne Memories"*, *"The Squatter's Dream"*, *Robbery Under Arms*, etc.; Ada Cambridge, the writer of *"Unspoken Thoughts"* (1887) and *"Not All in Vain"*, etc.; Mrs. Campbell Praed, who wrote *"Tasma"*, while Mary Gaunt, Ethel Turner, Catherine Helen Spence, and one or two others, deserve a wider public recognition, and a greater appreciation than they received.

*Geoffry Hamlyn* is an interesting novel dealing with the author's experiences in Australia; it is a romance of the early pastoral settlement, a simple narrative of the principal

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(1) *The Development of Australian Literature.* (Turner and Sutherland).

events in the histories of three families. "The charm (1) of this novel lies in the dewy freshness of its colouring. Over the simple narrative, over the picturesque description of expansive nature, over the pleasant atmosphere of prosperous homes in the uncharted bush, is cast an aura of glowing human kindness. The simplicity of the heroic characters is grand even in the character of the villain, Geoffrey Hamlyn one finds a spark of generosity."

Sir Edwin Arnold thought Geoffrey Hamlyn one of the finest pieces of fiction ever composed—it was the first "digger" novel of importance.

In his book "For the Term of His Natural Life" Marcus Clarke according to one critic (2) has probably done Australia more harm than any other libel perpetrated on her since 1788. If the book has literary qualities, he continues, it lacks the Australian spirit. However, it might be mentioned in reply that the work has captured a wide circle of readers, due to its realistic touches, its fine craftsmanship, and its brilliant passages. The final chapter is powerfully effective, but the sensationalism aroused is perhaps more of a journalistic success, a straining for effect than a statement of truth. Many readers regard the book as an attempt to eliminate the evils suffered by the social outcasts—men and women, who had become degraded and dehumanised, but who in reality possessed sterling qualities that a better social system would have developed.

Rolf Boldrewood (T. A. Browne) according to A. W. Jose, writes more like an immigrant than an Australian, but Turner (3) and Sutherland place him in the front rank of the workers in the fields of Australian fiction. In his book "The Squatter's Dream", he gave a realistic picture of the troubles that beset the squatter, while another work—"Robbery Under Arms" gave the world a book that will always be read and enjoyed. The work is a story of stirring adventure, presenting a fine portrayal of character with a bush-ranger "Starlight" as the main hero.

According to Colin Roderick, Rolf Boldrewood in a measure contributed something to the belief in the future of Australia. He seemed to hesitate between sending his heroes back in affluence to England, and retaining them as builders of a new society in Australia. "Robbery Under Arms", is more a story for the adolescent, and Starlight a character that makes a greater appeal to the young than to the old.

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(1) The Australian Novel, Colin Roderick, Wm. Brooks & Co., Sydney, 1945.

(2) A. W. Jose.

(3) Development of Australian Literature. (Turner & Sutherland).

Stories of Australia as exemplified in "Robbery Under Arms" may have had an injurious reaction on the community, but they brought Australia prominently before the world, and prepared the way for a genius to come who would do justice to his country by means of a magnum opus.

This section concludes with a reference to the work of the *Sydney Bulletin* (1880-1900 and later).

The *Sydney Bulletin* was founded by John Haynes and J. F. Archibald. Under Archibald's editorship—and its soul for 20 years—it became the articulate voice of young Australia. The editor aimed at creating a spirit of nationalism; he encouraged lovers of Australia to express in prose and verse, what they felt about their own land—matter that dealt with every phase of life in Australia: In the pages of the *Bulletin* (1) "Ed. Dyson spoke for the miners, E. J. Brady for the sea-men, Boske for the tragedies, Ogilvie for the bush, Louis Becke for the South Sea Adventure, Price Warung for prison records, Steele Rudd for the station settlement, while John Farrell supplied patriotic themes."

(2) Victor Daley, Christopher Brennan and Bernard O'Dowd were some of the poets recognised by Archibald as writers in the Australian literary field. Daley was a magical singer. Brennan a passionate philosopher, Bernard O'Dowd the soul of Australia. In his endeavours to further literature Archibald encouraged the young bush bards; he trained them to write; he turned and toned in some cases their half-articulate warblings into poetry; his advice and direction nursed their work to a high level, while his Federal sense tended to make his disciples continent-minded.

The poets and writers dealt with in the second period display more surely the aesthetic touch than those of the first period; or to put it differently, an aesthetic superiority manifested itself in the poems of Harpur, in the lovely lyrics of Kendall, in the melodies of F. S. Williamson, the ballads of Victor Daley and the sonnets of William Gay. The works of other writers, if they could not be included in the same category of pure aesthetics, at least they helped man's spiritual (3) activity: "they gave to their readers good poetry or prose charged with emotion and a work of art that could be enjoyed."

The prose style of Kingsley, Marcus Clarke, and even Rolf Boldrewood, the work of Dowell O'Reilly, the creative literature of Henry Lawson and the Philosophy of "Such is Life",

(1) *The Australian Novel*. (Colin Roderick).

(2) *The Development of Australian Literature* (Turner & Sutherland).

(3) *The Problem of Art*. (Peter Green).

by Joseph Furphy, (the last three appearing towards the close of the second period) appealed to a large audience for various reasons, but particularly for the quality displayed, and it is difficult to dismiss their contributions from the aesthetic circle. The Second period was important for being the preparation for the further development of literature under Federation.

### THE THIRD PERIOD—AFTER FEDERATION.

The years 1900-1948, meant for the world big changes—material, mechanical, political, economic, social, and religious. The impact of scientific thought, the illuminating ideas that followed from discoveries in science, and the varied experiences made possible to people as a result; the new attitude arising from the organisation of a civilised social life, the transition in outlook due to the adventures, and the voyages of discovery among remotest people made possible by mechanisation, were all events of world-wide significance. In the spiritual world, great changes were also noticeable. Scientific discoveries supplying a flood of new ideas, providing a mass of material for the development of literature; a wider and a less accountable audience joined the patrons of the book market; the reading public somewhat uncertain at first of their ideologies, increased immensely, literary authors conscious of a common purpose—a sort of unifying idea of interdependence and interpenetration of the social and psychological man, aimed at increasing the circulation of their books and at emphasising the merits of the common man.

The new age brought with it a spate of extension manuals on literature, aesthetics, philosophy, politics and religious thought. The materials for great literature were abundant, since the atmosphere was crowded with expansive ideas waiting to be symbolised in art.

The Victorian cult of self-perfection was supplanted by the plan of working for others, while the idea of being too genteel to earn money by writing, died away to be replaced by the attitude of the scholar alert to become a successful businessman. His aim too was to renew art constantly, sure its creative influence depended on surprise with a fresh presentation of theme.

The Universities helped considerably in the development of literature, for in Australia by 1914 the academic authorities had introduced English Literature and Language as a first class subject into the curriculum, and while the Universities (1) en-

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(1) English Literature in the 20th Century. (A. V. Routh).

couraged students to look backward for their culture, and to appreciate excellence, after it had been perfected and stereotyped in certain styles and rhythms.

The authors, too, attacked multifold types of problems and apparently enjoyed their subtlety. Some were content to develop control over material; the genius of others made them sensitive to people rather than to things, to conflicts rather than to harmony; others again, noted for their creative energy, delved into all sorts of subjects, cast about for new vistas, and heedless of authority, political opinions or old traditions displayed consummate art in the telling of their stories, or indicated a rare discernment into the vagaries of the human heart, while small groups of critics of life and letters scattered over the land sought to weed out the commonplace and unessential, and by raising the standards of literary art, provided a richer and more vital revelation of beauty, and that genuine inspiration which alone gives birth to the highest efforts of poetry and prose. All these features undoubtedly influenced the third period of Australian Literature—the years of Federation, (1900-1948) for Australia during those years became more an integral part of the world; all movements—scientific, economic, literary, and religious were soon reflected in the Australian skies, and the two great wars 1914-1918, 1939-1945, introduced the world to Australia and the terra Australis to the world.

The third period, 1900-1948, showed a decided advance on the previous one. Among the improvements are noted a variety in the style of work produced, a higher quality in the technique attained, a wider range of subjects chosen, while a more scholarly expression of subject-matter, a more defined cultural ideal, indicated that the Australian literary aesthetic was operating in the poetry, the prose, the fiction, the Belles Lettres and even in the floating literature. The reader of poems or prose works produced during the years 1900-1948, will notice the improvement in tone; the personalities in the works of fiction are appropriately coloured; the language employed is fluent and effortless; the springs of knowledge and fancy appear more easily unsealed, while the unexpectedness of allusion, the grace of illustration, the transfer of theme, are characteristics that give beauty, felicity and grandeur to the literature. Love, too, in the productions is human rather than aristocratic; heroes and heroines figure as ordinary people; sweet sentiment and tender emotion subsist with lowliness; economic drawbacks and humble environment do not preclude an individual from association with the seers and the sages of one's country.

The Federation years were also responsible for an increase in biographical works, a more general development for a few years of the short story, the presence of personal books, the beginning of literary criticism and a wider use of history as well as works dealing with anthropology, scientific subjects, politics, education, religion, philosophy, sociology, economics, in fact with every department of life, but the chief possession of the Australian writers was undoubtedly the consciousness of nationhood—they realised that Australia was a nation.

Some of the writers figuring in this period played a part in the years 1880-1900, like Henry Lawson, (Banjo) Paterson, Bernard O'Dowd and E. J. Brady. These writers, as well as others, also showed more maturity (1), a more admirable technique, a richer imaginative power in the Federation period than in the earlier stage.

Australian poetry from 1900 to the present day could be considered contemplative in a few instances, academic in some cases, emotional in most cases, and interesting in all cases. What the writers said was always touched with beauty; their work showed a mastery of the craft and art of poetry. Hugh McCrae, son of Gordon, displayed to the Australian world a fine singing quality in his patriotic verses, William Gay likewise shared the nationalistic emotion, Bernard O'Dowd in his national sonnets was perhaps too abstract, too abstruse, too classical to find an appreciative public, yet curiously enough in his lectures and addresses, he always insisted on the need for clarity, facility of expression and the wisdom of writing so as to be understood by everyone. However, in spite of his abstruseness, O'Dowd, remains one of the most interesting personalities in Australian literature. He is a poet, a prophet and social reformer—a man endowed with great intellectual vigour, and one always ready to help others with the results of his experience, and to point out to them the rare qualities that true poetry demands for an aesthetic.

As in other sections it is not necessary to name all the poets and writers of the period, but E. J. Brady with his sea-songs, Henry Lawson with his ballads, Edward Dyson with tales from the mines, Victor Daley, the maker of images, A. B. Paterson, Will Ogilvie, Roderic Quinn, Bernard O'Dowd, "John O'Brien", James Hebblewaite, Louise Mack, David McKee, Wright, "Furnley Maurice", Shaw Neilson, Frederick Macartney, A. T. Strong, R. D. Fitzgerald, William Blackside, F. S. Williamson, J. B. O'Hara, C. J. Dennis, Marie E. J. Pitt, Zora Cross, Dorothea Mackellar, Winifred Shaw, Marion Miller Knowles, Enid Derham, Hugh McCrae, William Baylebridge, etc., are

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(1) Modern Australian Literature. (Nettie Palmer).

among the more prominent contributors to Australia's aesthetic. Women writers, according to Nettie Palmer contributed less to their quota of poetry than they should have done; nor have they always written the kind of poem expected from them. Australia has produced, so far, only one philosopher-poet—William Baylebridge who worked out a systematic philosophy of his own. In reality he has two philosophies, one about man and the universe, the other about man as a political animal. Baylebridge has a style full of echoes—the outcome of a man browsing on the pastures of others. "Life's Testament," contains his best poems.

R. D. Fitzgerald is an intellectual poet with a lyrical gift and he gives indication that his intellectuality may overlap the lyrical. Fitzgerald is an adventurer of the spirit sailing out into the wide seas of the mind. He published "To Meet the Sun" (1929), and "Moonlight Acre", 1938. His finest poem is "Essay on Memory"—a poem in which he talks of the progress of mankind, but the past he insists is still present "with its traces, vestiges and results."

The poets that have helped the recent Australian aesthetic are J. A. R. McKellar, the Australian Chatterton (1904-1931), T. I. Moore, Kenneth Slessor, Mary Gilmore, Hubert Church, Sydney Jephcott, Will Lawson and Capel Boake.

With most of the Australian poets, melody was the chief characteristic of their poetry; the lines sang in time to secure the perfect marriage of emotion with words. Beauty of expression, touches of the sublime, elegant phrasing, grandeur, beauty, force, power—a breathing into dead things of the past, the living voice of the present; these are the things, noted in our Australian poets like Bernard O'Dowd, Victor Daley, Dorothea Mackellar and many others.

The true poet utters his own soul, and great poetry is the utterance of that to which the human soul responds, of that which the human soul endorses. To know a work of literature is to know the soul of the man who created it. Literature in its secluded chamber is the meeting place of two souls tuned to each other like musical instruments, illustrating Lucan's beautiful phrase—*Pacem summa tenent*.

While most of the Australian poets intermix into their poetry elements from the general thought, a few, like Christopher Brennan, J. S. Neilson, Hugh McCrae, L. H. Allen and R. D. Fitzgerald, symbolists or mystics—wrote out of the impression made by the world upon their delicate senses. They belonged to the ideal world and had intuitional experience tran-



scending the ordinary. Such men were purely of the aesthetic school, and could not be popular because their readers did not too readily understand them without attaining to a like delicacy of sensation. Keats, we are told, sang of a beauty so wholly pre-occupied with itself, that its contemplation was a sort of lingering trance, but we are not sure that Keats was a popular poet while he lived.

Brennan, according to H. M. Green, was one of the finest classical scholars that Australia has produced, and one whose poetry is coloured deeply by his scholarship. Brennan's work is marked by beauty and a "mastery (1) of the craft and art of poetry for which no parallels can be found in Australia . . . He is the emotional intellectual, in whom brain and blood are in intimate co-partnership, making lyric the cry of the mind as well as of the heart."

Brennan, according to A. W. Jose was a recluse—one who gathered round himself at his *causeries*, rugged or introspective geniuses of his own sort. In temper, technique, atmosphere, decisive derivation, directive influences and allegiances, he belonged to a tradition of the old world—not to England merely, but to Europe in its progress to poetry of the most supreme order. Scholarship with Brennan was a vital thing that engaged his deepest spiritual forces. In his spiritual growth he was at home in the territories, where poetry had advanced to the furthest points and Brennan will always enjoy the esteem, and something more than the esteem of those, who love poetry in its purest form.

Hartley Grattan wrote that Brennan was the antithesis of the Australian popular poets. Such a poet gave notice that Australia was not all swaggies, and he awaited the development of a greater sensitivity than was characteristically noticeable. He further felt that the inspiration of a sound Australian culture today and tomorrow, will be found in the writings of Tom Collins, Henry Lawson, B. O'Dowd and Miles Franklin. "The basic Australian literary tradition is a compound of sound learning, rebelliousness, ardent faith in the common man, and an even more ardent faith in the Australian future—"

Brennan's first book of poems "Towards the Source" (1897) gave the indication of his symbolist tendencies.

J. S. Neilson (1872-1942) was one of Australia's unlettered poets who sang simple songs as the birds sing—naturally, tunefully, beautifully. His was a poetic inheritance, a man unconcerned with the technique of his art, a character un-

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(1) An Outline of Australian Literature (H. M. Green).

assuming and devoid of vanity, yet a mystic to whom the world had a meaning; a poet who saw life within his range, and with rare intensity, but excluded by reason of his lack of scholarship and bad sight, from the treasures of the past and the glories of the present.

Fate compelled Neilson to work hard with his hands for a living: the incessant grind made an old man of him before his time, and probably dimmed the creative spark within him; yet this poet contributed to our culture, and according to James Devaney (1) "this bookless working man, the casual labourer takes his place among the aristocracy of the great, because he made our songs", and because, according to Professor A. R. Chisholm "he used fresh simple words—all full of beauty, tenderness, sweetness—lyrics that express something of the lark's song." According to H. M. Green, Neilson like Keats was a poet of ecstasy.

Whatever Neilson says, he says it exquisitely. He was fond of colours especially of green and his imagery was such as to indicate all the hidden things within him. His songs were songs of joy and rapture. Other poets, too, were beautiful. Mary Gilmore is at her best in "The Wild Swan" (1930); H. M. Green in "The Book of Beauty"; Quinn "sits out in the aesthetic moonlight, while the world goes on with the dance"; Daley sought beauty in the role of a Bohemian, Brereton ("Sea and Sky," 1908), pursued his ideal of beauty with a scholarly diligence; McCrae excelled in the music of his lines—all gave illustrations of the richest flowers of literature; all were "God's priests in the diocese of Beauty".

The two wars were responsible for the production of poetry and an extraordinary increase of it due to the stirring up of all the romantic element that was slumbering away in life, unsuspected during so many years. Some poets went to the war singing as they went, some even sang as they died.

The first Great War however did not make the literary impression that might have been expected. The members of the A.I.F. wrote very little that could be called poetry—Edwin Gerard, Harold Hansell, Leo Gellert and H. W. Pryce were four who published verses relating to incidents in the war, dealing with facts rather than with ideals, but all represented the spirit of the Australian soldier. In "An Anthology of Verse by Australian Service-men" compiled by Ian Mudie (1944) he included short poems of the Second War by John Quinn, Frank O'Connell, Shawn O'Leary, Kenneth Mackenzie, T. Inglis Moore, Eric Irwin, J. Alex Allan, R. S. Byrnes, A. G. Austin, etc.

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(1) Meanjin Papers. (Melb University Press)

Some of the poems in the Anthology were by authors who were afterwards killed, or became P's.O.W., or died shortly after the war. Most of the poems were short; some dealt with incidents of the war; some indicated a longing to return home; others related to the time spent "On Leave"; all were interesting, and many were of good quality.

The poets of the third period of Australian literature were numerous, but the poetry produced according to an authority, on the whole, sounded more like a chorus of minor performers, if we except the few who reached a high level of competence like C. Brennan, J. S. Neilson, Bernard O'Dowd and R. D. Fitzgerald. Some of the poets tried to popularise poetry by doing what Byron had done. Byron maintained that modern poetic literature with its excessive concentration on the lyric condemned poetry to an unduly limited audience, making it individual, whereas it should become communal, speaking to a crowd not to a lonely reader. Many of the poets who wrote in this period failed to make much impression and much of what they wrote could not be read with genuine pleasure and a direct simplicity of appreciation.

### FEDERATION PROSE.

The impression, in the main, that one gets of the period 1900-1948, is pre-eminently the development of the novel.

The period under review was one of change, ferment, iconoclasm and in some cases chaos—economic, moral and intellectual. The material dealt with in the novel reflected to a certain extent the complicated changes taking place in society, the unrest caused by economic depressions, the upset brought about by industrial troubles.

Australian prose underwent big changes in the course of its seventy or eighty years of existence. The first novels described the convicts and their caprices; they dealt with the episodes of the bushrangers; they enumerated incidents that related to the squatters and their holdings; they summarised and magnified events of the goldfields. Romantic touches, weird and rough colouring, realistic additions made the books interesting and helped to find a large circle of readers, but with the period that ushered in Federation a new spirit—a patriotic one animated the writers, those who saw life with a clearer vision; the subject matter became different, the outlook changed, and there was a general endeavour to make Australia articulate. Contemporary fiction widened, the novel advanced from the leisurely bush chronicle to the quickened tempo of drama in the cities and slums. The novelist catching up with contemporary world trends gave his work the touch of

maturity, enabling it to compare favourably with current over-sea fiction and demanding the judgment of international standards.

The subject matter of the novel was diverse, the technical resources abundant, an academic influence was noted for the first time; the writers were romantic or realistic; behind their efforts seemed to appear a big reserve of power; the personal factor in public affairs implied importance; humour was often assumed as a criterion of truth, and the novel had established itself as a fairly accurate expression of social life.

The first novelist of the Federation era to attract attention was Ada Cambridge, although she, too, figured in the period 1860-1900. Ada Cambridge (Mrs. G. F. Cross) was the wife of a Church of England minister, and as she moved about Victoria, she saw life under many aspects, but perhaps her outlook had an ecclesiastical bent, rather than a universal one. Ada Cambridge wrote thirty novels, in most of which she discussed domestic issues and social problems. "A marked Man", was her best novel but "Thirty Years in Australia", published in 1903, will always interest a reader. Ada Cambridge died in 1926, but Literary Societies in Melbourne still erect plaques in her honour and celebrate her anniversaries with éclat in an endeavour to restrain the mildew of time from creeping over the name of one who wrote so beautifully of, and described so accurately the Victoria she knew.

Another early novelist was A. H. Davis, "Steele Rudd," who is best remembered for his book "On Our Selection" 1899, "Our New Selection" 1903. "On Our Selection," deals with incidents that happened to a family engaged in mixed farming on the Darling Downs, Queensland—it describes the struggle of the poor, small selector, whose courage, resource and good humour, always helped him in his trials and difficulties.

Henry Lawson in his short stories immortalised the people of his time and place. The social history he dealt with, the struggle of the free settlers in the sixties to the eighties, the throbbing, eager, ever-hopeful lives of the alluvial diggers in the gold rushes, the open-handed and open-hearted casual, careless droving days have been recorded with vivid truth in his work.

It is impossible (1) to conceal the profound influence of Dickens on his style in his stories, but it was the reading of Bret Harte's short tales similar in setting to the life that Lawson lived, that inspired him years after, to transcribe it into imperishable prose. Poetry was also for Henry Lawson a living

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(1) The Royal H.M. (T. D. Mutch). Vol. XVIII (1932).

thing, and it will be more by his poetry than by his prose, that he will be best remembered. He stands above class, and ranks as a national figure in his advocacy of what are essentially national principles. As an exponent of the truth of fact, he is classed as the greatest of our realists.

Joseph Furphy (Tom Collins) while living at Shepparton in Victoria, wrote two books, "Such is Life" (first published in 1903) and "Rigby's Romance", written about 1905, but not published in book form until 1921. "Such is life", has been republished two or three times, abridged in one case.

"Such is Life," is considered to be an Australian classic—it is more than a novel, it is a treatise, dealing with philosophy, literary criticism, musing on religion, etc. The work is often formless and patchy in presentation but exemplifying skill in description always rich with humour. The book, however, notwithstanding its fame and the encomiums of its critics, is by no means easy to read or bristling with interest. "Such is Life" is more revered than read, a book for the shelf rather than for the arm-chair.

Mrs. Jeannie Gunn, Aeneas Gunn, a one-time teacher, deals with the up-North and her work "The Little Black Princess of the Never Never" (1905), "We of the Never Never," (1908) presents to her readers the aboriginal practices, the psychology of the primitive people of the North of Australia, as well as their customs, their religious ritual, their corroborees etc., she also paints a very faithful picture of life on a Northern Station.

Katherine Susannah Prichard for her first novel wrote "Pioneers"—a prize-winner. In 1921, she published "Black Opal," in 1926 "Working Bullocks", "Coornardoo," in 1929, "Intimate Strangers" in 1937 and "Haxby's Circus" in the early thirties. All her books are worth reading; they are of a high order of merit and best of all the authoress suggests to other writers themes for their novels and a new field for exploration.

"Brent of Bin Bin" is probably the writer, Miles Franklin, the author of "My Brilliant Career." A competent authority in a lecture 1946, given to the members of the Australian Literary Society, proved beyond doubt that Miles Franklin was responsible for the books—"Up the Country" (1928), "Ten Creeks Run" 1930, "Back to Bool Bool" (1931).

Henry Handel Richardson's novel stands on a high level and perhaps she ranks supreme in the Australian novel field. She preferred to hide her real name, but was a married woman—a doctor's wife. She wrote several books "Maurice Guest",

"The Getting of Wisdom", "The Young Cosima", "The End of Childhood and other Stories" but her greatest effort is her trilogy—"The Fortunes of Richard Mahony"—the high water mark in Australian fiction—a work that occupied her attention for fifteen years. It is a work of genius according to H. M. Green. Part one of the trilogy is termed "Australia Felix," Part two—"The Way Home", and Part three, "Ultima Thule." It was the success of Ultima Thule that made people interested in the other two books and thence as a result, they appreciated the whole of her three books.

M. Barnard Eldershaw is the name taken by two authors, the Misses Eldershaw and Barnard, both collaborators in writing several novels: "A House is Built" (1929), "Green Memory", 1931, "The Glass House" 1936, "Plague with Laurel", "Essays in Australian Fiction", 1938 and "Phillip of Australia". Most of the works deal with the development and growth of Australia.

Vance Palmer wrote "The World of Men", 1915, "Cronulla", 1924, "The Outpost" (1924) which became "The Hurricane" in 1935. "The Man Hamilton", 1928 and his best—"The Passage", 1930. "Legend for Sanderson" (1937), "Leonard Mann", "Flesh in Armour", and "Mountain Flat" were others that the world owes to his pen.

Among our best novelists must be included the name of Frank Dalby Davison who has won several major prizes for his fine work. His first novel was "Forever Morning", then "Man-shy", "The Wells of Beersheba", "Children of the Dark People", etc. Some other good novelists are Brian Penton, Eleanor Dark, the writer of the historical novel "The Timeless Land". Zora Cross, William Hay, and William Baylebridge, with his collection of short stories, and then outstanding novels like Christine Stead's "House of all Nations", Xavier Herbert's "Capricornia", Seaforth MacKenzie's "Chosen People", and others that have made a world appeal.

Australia so far has not had many writers keen in a quest for spiritual privilege and personal purification, for the training of an inner life and for mystical communion. On the contrary, the humanitarian ideal, the work of the social reformer, the sympathy towards suffering, the misfortunes of one's fellow-man have been the main objects of interest. There have been few visionaries for whom the things unseen and afar off, are the nearest and only real things worth consideration. Some Australian writers tell their stories making a web woven of threads that have been spun in different lands; some write

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(1) An Outline of Australian Literature. (H. M. Green).

of the social problems of their own land; others write like journalists who always appear to lead a hurried life, while finally, some have scored success by dealing with historical subjects and by weaving romances around the people of the past.

Australian achievements are creditable enough to arouse legitimate pride. Her fiction writers have won warm recognition abroad, e.g. "Capricornia" by Xavier Herbert, or "The Timeless Land" by Eleanor Dark, and other books have made a big impression overseas. "Seven little Australians", has been translated into various European languages, "Man-shy" has been hailed in other lands as a classic. Australian novelists, according to the Sydney Morning Herald (1), have caught up with the contemporary world trends, and paint the present in terms of social realism.

It would make a long chapter to mention all the novelists. From Louis Becke's stories of the South Seas to the outstanding novel of Eric Lowe's "Salute to Freedom we have representatives of all phases of fiction, the personal books of Mary Fullerton like "Bark House Days"; the family story type of Ethel Turner, Ion L. Idriess with his Australian inland stories of adventure, Norman Lindsay's stories for children, and today stories of the War, the inter-war period, as well as the post-war rehabilitation have inspired writers with an earnest desire for progress, a generous spirit of philanthropy, of human equality, and of Christian society: they bring out the need for a social reconstruction for peace and future prosperity.

Works of criticism and Belles Lettres in Australian Literature are not numerous: essays generally have found little favour because of the leisure they need to compose them and the absence of a suitable market for their sale. In "Poetry Militant" (1909) Bernard O'Dowd pleaded for a purpose in all poetry. A. G. Stephens, P. I. O'Leary, James Devaney, Arthur Adams, David McKee Wright, and Frank Morton, are considered competent critics, while the only essay writers noticed were Professor Walter Murdoch, Professor A. T. Strong, "Furnley Maurice", Mary Gilmore and T. G. Tucker.

Anthologies have been published at different times by Percival Serle, W. Murdoch, Bertram Stevens, M. P. Hansen, G. Mackaness, and Professor Morris Miller of Tasmania, whose History of Australian Literature in two volumes is a masterpiece.

A. G. Stephens has been regarded after D. H. Deniehy as one of Australia's most reliable critics. (2) "His literary tastes were catholic; his natural interests wide. He knew the life of the

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(1) 7th December, 1946. Sydney Morning Herald.

(2) Foreword to Life and Work of A. G. Stephens, by Vance Palmer.

country, revelled in its idiom, enjoyed any story that had an Australian character stamped upon it. But he had also been quickened by the contemporary writings of Europe. His policy on the Red Page was to stimulate Australian writing, to assess its value, and to connect it with the main stream of European culture."

Many owed their existence as authors to Stephen's discernment; he insisted on the necessity of "taste" in literature; that aesthetic effects were not the aim of poetry but that true poetry must have a meaning; "by the meaning not by the music or the dress it will ultimately stand or fall."

Among the historians worthy of notice during the Federation years were Ernest Scott, C. E. W. Bean, Walter Murdoch, A. W. Jose, Professor Hancock and George Mackaness. Several Australian writers have dealt with religion, education, anthropology, geography, geology, economics, scientific subjects, social psychology and literary studies, etc., and many of the books written have made an impression on the scholars and thinkers in other lands, both as regards the contents of their productions and the quality of their presentation.

The development of Australian Literature has really only begun: there are many unoccupied fields awaiting the vivifying touch of a writer who will people his work with the creatures of his imagination, with their ups and downs, their joys and sorrows, their successes and failures. Already many books in Australia have fallen by the way; some were feeble in conception and weak in construction; others were of inferior quality, and destitute of any feature to ensure permanence; some appealed to a limited circle and obtained little encouragement to make further contribution to the world of fiction; others found an enthusiastic public but an early death removed the writers from the continuance of further activities.

It is often a matter of complaint that too many early Australian books are now out of print, and that only on rare occasions is it possible to secure some. The older libraries of Sydney and Melbourne make it possible to peruse still many of the books written before the Federation time. The valuable Mitchell Library is a repository, where the student may seek and read the preserved writings of the past.

Whether all Australian literature has aesthetic value, or makes an aesthetic appeal, can only be judged by time. It is sufficient to say that many libraries—public and private are proud of their Australiana. Many books have been looked upon



as classics; many have been read and continue to be read for the pleasure they give, or to obtain that imaginative culture which is so necessary for our civilisation.

The great majority of Australian writers as literary craftsmen with the use of words, the fashioning of phrases and the presentation of noble themes and beautiful stories, showed "that (1) they loved beauty in every form, and had in them an awakening of a consciousness of the unattainable loveliness of the world."

If a great literature presupposes that writers and readers alike have a deep interest in the kind of life which is to be found where they live, then there need be no fear for the future of Australian literature.

Pure Literature in Australia has never been dominated by the social group of the aristocracy; the patronage of a great lord does not exist; no literature is written with an eye on the approval of a moneyed patron. Most often the writer is one who struggles, and his imaginative writing flourishes in the province of adversity. Opportunities for publication are few; magazines or periodicals seeking contributions are almost negligible, and no publisher will entertain a work unless he can see a ready return for the cost involved in the publication. Many Australian writers carried away by the desire to convey their message to the world, had to be satisfied with reading their story or article in the weekly paper; a few were able to publish their work privately only to sink into that literary limbo, where dwell the "Great Unread"; others more fortunately selected a theme that appealed to the popular fancy, but a number—the research men, contented themselves by knowing that their book would always be a valuable contribution to scholarship and knowledge, and would secure for them a posthumous approval, if in the years to come, some one would publish it.

Australians owe a debt to their literary artists, who have gladdened life by adding to the stock of harmless pleasure, and to those who have helped to develop a love for books, a taste for reading and a fascination for the library. Love of books presupposes an aesthetic personality, and literary enjoyment is surely an aesthetic phase. Wise reading helps to develop taste; the better the style read, the more readily is the aesthetic ideal attained. Style and taste deal with beauty; where there is beauty, there is literature; where there is no beauty there may be originality and even depth, but the text remains outside the sphere of literature. Longinus says "Beautiful words are

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(1) Literary Craftsmanship and Appreciation. (Ronald Fuller).

indeed the very light of the mind;" it is only with such words that literature has to do. St. Ambrose's prayer puts the matter well. "Intret spiritus tuus bonus in cor meum, qui sonet ibi sine sono et sine strepitu verborum loquatur omnem veritatem." Many (1) poets feel that a sense of beauty is the crown of culture, even the blessedness of a religion.

Literature's great work is to elevate the taste, to display visible shapes of beauty, to help people to knowledge and enjoyment, and to make them feel their common interest in intellectual and moral progress.

Australian writers have shown that life and literature are inter-dependent; each needs the other. Without life, literature would have no content, no subject matter; but without literature what would life be? Narwitz says of "The Fountain"—a masterpiece by Charles Morgan "Some books are absolute—absolute in art or philosophy. They are no more changed by the circumstances in which we read them, than a lake is changed by the morning images of ourselves that we perceive in it."

Bergson observes that Nature has given us a sign by which we know that we have reached our destination. That sign is joy—joy, not pleasure. Wherever there is joy, there is creation; the richer the creation, the deeper the joy. Australian prose and poetry from 1900 to the present day has a joyous ring, a tradition of tolerance.

As the Australians have now found their soul (2), its literature will always find a voice. The delicious odour of its wattles, the hedonistic joy in life noticeable among the Australians, the nature of the country and climate, today so ruthless, tomorrow so alluring; with the people so patriotic, the keynote of their philosophy so optimistic, with their keenness for aesthetic effects in their literary records, Australia may yet be immortalised by the quality of its literature, and the aesthetic ideal of its labourers in its literary fields.

Aesthetes in Australia do not represent a formidable number, but the literary contributions of writers during the past seventy years have helped considerably in developing an Australian aesthetic, if the word means and includes what the Thesis has set out to establish. Essays, poems, novels, Belles-Lettres, the literary supplements of our newspapers and many other phases of the literary field, have all helped in providing touches of perfection in a seemingly imperfect world. Personality in lyric poetry, the soul "singing free from the shackles of

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(1) "The Testament of Beauty", 1929. (R. S. Bridges).

(2) Fortnightly Review, Nov., 1914. (A. Waugh).

circumstances", mental discipline and a rich acquaintance with books and intellectual atmospheres, ecstasy (1) as the test of fine literature—these are the things that create the aesthetic, these are the features that relate primarily to Beauty, Truth and Goodness—elements that spring eternal in the heart of man.

### CONCLUSION.

As a conclusion to Section III, it might be remarked that in the evolution of Australian literature there was no floating literature that was oral, as is generally the case in other countries, available to help its development, but there was ample literature of periodical writing, i.e. journalism in its multiple forms—an instrument ephemeral in character, but one dealing with life and qualified to throw light on the characteristics of the age.

H. M. Green (2) wrote that our best writers "aim at cultivating a cosmopolitan spirit, rather than the naturalism of the nineties and the 1900 period. They treat of psychology rather than of action and of incident—hence their works gain in artistic value and breadth "The Ballad remains in its grave, the short story, is not so vigorous . . . today the tendency of the Australian is to learn the best that his own land reveals, to be interested in its past and in those who bore a prominent part in its progress, in Australian History, Literature, writers, etc. . . ."

It is interesting to review the change that has come over Australian Literature in the past 100 years. The first Australian novels had an exoticism of foreign travel and adventure—the unknown, the new, the strange was the central element of interest, while the appreciation of English Literature and English life was the main factor in its imaginative literature.

The period of Australian literary growth compared with European standards is only a short one—a bare one hundred years. During the past thirty years encouragement in the literary effort has not been withheld. The Commonwealth Literary Fund has helped struggling authors a little, but as has been said elsewhere, more encouragement would have produced better results, and more judicious assistance would have benefited the fertile Australian minds.

One writer maintains that Australian writing has always struggled along, like some of our native plants that do not yield to cultivation, but refuse to be extirpated. When readers

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(1) Arthur Machen.

(2) An Outline of Australian Literature. (H. M. Green).

discover mysticism in Charles Harpur, one of Australia's early poets; philosophy in the work of Adam Lindsay Gordon; patriotism in the lines of Dorothea Mackellar; psychology in "Furnley Maurice"; beauty and charm reflected in all the anthologies of Australian poets, and novelists finding easy access to English and American markets for their books, they are quite unaware of the stubborn soil on which Australian literature first struggled, and the difficulties it encountered, to enable it to achieve the aesthetic response that it enjoys today.

The material difficulties which time, circumstances, and the trend of public opinion help to diminish, may have disappeared, but to the eminent scholars, poets, writers and leaders of the past the greatest praise is due, for they made it possible for the people of the present, to enrich their minds with the golden treasury of knowledge, to utilise the wealth of literature provided, and to appreciate the seminaries of culture that are now available to them. Over many of these past great men, like N. D. Stenhouse, Dr. Woolley, David Scott Mitchell—pioneers in the literary field, the mildew of time has crept slowly, but as they all saw beyond the transitory, as they were seers faithful to the things of the spirit, as they illumined life by endeavouring to refine and perfect it, they will always be inspiring examples, models, philosophers, beacons for the Australians; they will always serve as reliable guides for those who seek to transmute by the alchemy of their genius the baser things of life into the better, to identify the ideals of literature with the ideals of life, and to further the aesthetics of their country.

## CHAPTER SEVEN.

### AUSTRALIAN ART.

#### INTRODUCTION.

If Literature be the first competitor in the aesthetic field, then it is safe to say that Art holds the second place, even though, some writers would place it first. Literature is the attempt of man to express all human experiences that have inherent in them sufficient emotion and imaginative vitality to make them significant. The arts attempt to interpret human experiences, but the artist (1) who expresses himself in words, selects not only an everlasting medium, but the one most generally understood. The artist who expresses himself on canvas, or by means of a painting, drawing, design, architectural achievement or even music chooses a luminous way, and it is his method of presentation that forms the matter of art. The higher, deeper, finer the thing to be expressed, the finer the art.

The Shorter Oxford Dictionary indicates that the first meaning of the word "Art" is skill—human skill as the result of knowledge and practice. The whole activity of man in every department, seen in itself as a thing not simply as a means to an end is the thing called art. It is really a virtue of the practical mind, the peculiar attribute of the working reason. When a work of art is accomplished, it bears the impress of the artist; it is stamped with his likeness, marked with his seal, and is really the offspring of his soul and mind; the greater the subject matter the more vigorous his work. "Art (2) makes the maker of works an imitator of God, and in the spiritual world of the Fine Arts human art imitates God, realising in the intellectual order one of the fundamental aspects of the ontological resemblance of our soul to God."

In the world of pure spirits, there is the production of the mental word by which one spirit manifests what he knows to another spirit. The mind despite its many defects endeavours to engender and produce in others, and for others, a work either material or spiritual like to itself, with something of its own soul over and above. A work of art is an inanimate thing, a product of an artificial manufacture; the actual production has only one object in view—the good of the work to be done—the desire to make it as perfect as possible.

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(1) Judgment and Appreciation of Literature. (T. G. Tucker).

(2) Art and Scholasticism. (Jacques Maritain).

(3) Ibid.

The arts (3) are among the forces that mirror varied aspects of the great world, and reveal them to men and women of a smaller world. "Art (2) in its fullness is thus the real, translated into the temporal, and not the temporal clothed in an aesthetic form as transitory as itself."

Art remains outside the line of conduct with an-end rules and values, which are not those of the man, but of the work to be produced. That work is everything for art; one law only governs it—the exigencies and the good of the work; hence the despotic and all-absorbing power of art—it frees one from every human care; it establishes the artifex, artist or artisan in a world apart.

The work of art before being accomplished is prepared, formed, brooded over, matured in a mind before emerging into matter. It receives direction from the mind of man and it is his spirit that colours it. The same holds true with the literary artist who utilises words, and by selection and combination, harmonises them with a master's hand; he sets before his readers magic phrases wrought into a song, an ode, or an elegy etc., and he endeavours to make the reader see what he sees, and to feel what he feels.

While(1) some artists choose literature as a means of expression others select painting, music, architecture, sculpture etc., according as their fancy directs, or their ambition urges them. When the artist paints, he sets before himself a plan, a mental picture, an image, and he presents to his fellow-beings on canvas his idea, his delineation, the thought he entertained. The artistic work gives expression to the imagined picture which existed in the mind of the artist. Thus by art, mind communicates itself to mind, either through the eyes or through the ears; by spoken words and music through the ears; by painting, sculpture, architecture and written words, through the eyes.

Each art thus has its own vehicle of expression. Though the architects, sculptors, painters, musicians, poets, etc., meet upon the common ground of spiritual experience—though their works emanate from the spiritual nature of the race, and are coloured by the spiritual nature of the men who make them, yet they deal differently with the materials they use, with the objectives each artist sets before himself. Art is thus the expression of the human spirit by the artist to his fellow-men. The subject-matter of the arts is commensurate with what man thinks, and feels and does. "Art (3) is as deep as religion, as wide

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(1) Platform Monologues. (T. G. Tucker).

(2) Art and Scholasticism. (J. Maritain).

(3) Essays Special and Suggestive. (J. H. Symonds).

as life, but what distinguishes it from religion, or from life, is that its subject-matter must assist beautiful form and must be presented directly or indirectly to the senses. Art is not the school or the cathedral, but the playground, the paradise of humanity. Nothing abstract enters into art's domain, but Truth and Goodness are transmuted into beauty there."

Every work of art has a theme, a motive, or a subject, and the presentation of that theme, motive, or subject, is the final end of art. A work (1) of art is something that produces effects, and only in those effects can it be studied with profit. The arts, according to E. A. Richards (2) are our storehouse of recorded values. They record the most important judgments we possess as to the values of experience. If rightly approached, they supply the best data available for deciding what experiences are more valuable than others. Art, while permanent, varies like human nature itself; it is the outcome of faith and ardent conviction. Each fresh phase of artistic development carries with it the germ of change of thought and outlook, which eventually affects style at a later period. Slow and intelligent evolution is the mainspring of the arts.

Much of the misunderstanding about art is due to the modern habit of thinking of art as pictures, but is is not just painting and sculpture and architecture; it includes all the energies of the human race devoted to the beautifying of everything made by the hand of man. "Art", according to Percy Dearmer, "is not the putting of decorative trimming in the place of sober utility; it is not a plaything for the idle, a way of ostentation for the rich, a means of obtaining pleasure for the cultivated few." Beauty is the most salient of all the characteristics of art, its power prostrates the soul in wonder and crowns one's spirit with prolonged ecstasy, for Art is to life, as a sudden illumination that bursts over a leaden sky or sea. The artist is haunted by an ideal of beauty, whose face he can only partly unveil, but a glimpse of which he can draw. "The (3) recognition of beauty begins with fair forms, rises to fair minds, and thence, through the beauty of laws, institutions and sciences soars upward to universal beauty." The (4) more works of art excel in the true beauty of their presentation, the more profound is the inner truth of their content and thought, but the creative impulse behind the work of art, the skill of eye and hand indispensable to its making, the strange garment of style proclaiming the individuality of the artist is the thing that matters.

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(1) New Bearings on Aesthetics and Art Criticism. (B. C. Heyl).

(2) Principles of Literary Criticism. (E. A. Richards).

(3) Later Critiques by Augustus Rollé.

(4) Art and Religion (P. Dearmer).

Professor Croce writes that Art is the expression of intuition, but a better definition might be that art is the expression of spiritual values in terms of beauty. "Beauty (1), an eternal quality, is the work of God, whereas Art is the work of man. Art, however, although a human activity possesses eternal significance."

Art creates an ideal world in which perception, emotion, understanding, action, all elements of human life, sublimed by thought, reappear in concrete forms as beauty. Whatever art touches acquires a concrete sensuous embodiment, and thus ideas presented to the mind lose a portion of their pure thought-essence. In the form is placed some portion of the human mind. A work of art is really a thought inscribed in a symbol—hence symbolised formula and its frequent use.

(2) A work of Art wrote Professor John Anderson has effects—it advances a certain form of social organisation. The desire to increase the circulation of good literature is, of course, a social attitude, but the judgment of a book and the recommendation of it on the basis of that judgment are different things. The view that Art is always a social servant, and historically utilitarian, is false. Artistic products may advance a certain form of social organisation but it is not this fact that makes it artistic.

In a large measure through literature one enjoys the pleasures of nature and those of art. He who possesses a sense for form and colour, appreciates a fine picture without any knowledge of the technique of painting, but he sees comparatively little in it, if his taste has not been formed and trained by the study of masterpieces, and if his mind has not received the cultivation which letters and history give.

Some artists delineate the humblest aspects of modern life, and endow them with qualities that make them immortal. Sometimes they work in a world of quiet colour and happy aspiration; at other times rich and delicate beauties, glorious grace of form, an exquisite aroma of fragrance, are the characteristics that the artist favours. If a painter makes a faithful transcript of nature, he is a student; if he adapts the facts of nature to the character of his medium, he is a craftsman. If he does all this, and at the same time contrives to impart a certain decorative unity to the whole, he is an artist. In the first place we have observation; in the second place execution;

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(1) Art and Religion. (P. Dearmer).

(2) Some questions in Aesthetics by John Anderson (Sydney University Lit. Society, 1932).



Most of us desire to enjoy art but we lack both the industry and the intelligence, the sensibility and the experience, that are pre-requisites to its appreciation or criticism. Neither do we know which art most needs — intellect or reason. The appreciation or criticism of a poem, for example, is the poets making, and the skill he employs in that making. The emotion he produces is produced by words and by words alone. If we are moved by a poem, it is because the poet has succeeded in putting down words, which with the aid of their rhythm and sequence are moving.

Paradoxical as it may first appear, an intelligent understanding of Art is no more to be acquired by merely frequenting picture galleries than a proper understanding of music is to be gained by sitting through programmes in a concert hall. There is no such idea as a layman's point of view of art, for Art is a craft—a manipulation of material, as well as an expression in nature—hence the practice as well as the principles of art should be taught as a part of the ordinary course prescribed for those aspiring to a genuine appreciation of the same, or to a cultural outlook on life. The function (1) of Art is to beautify, and its province extends to everything made by the hand of man—from a salt-cellar to a cathedral, from the trimming of a hat to the most highly wrought picture, or piece of sculpture. The pleasure to be sought for in a picture lies in its truthful representation of nature, its skilful craftsmanship, its unity or decorative effect. It is a statement of the artist's view of nature, coloured by his own individuality.

"Be (1) careful to eschew all vagueness; it is better to be caught out in going wrong, when you have had a definite purpose than to shuffle and slur so that people cannot blame you, because they don't know what you are at. Hold fast to distinctive form in art. Always think out your design in your head before you begin to get it on paper. Don't begin by slobbering and messing about in the hope that something good may come out of it."

What (2) the majority of men seek in contemplating a work of art is an opportunity to indulge in the emotion of sympathy. A picture attracts them because of what appeals to them in the picture, a musical recital is beautiful because of some association with chords already familiar; the theatre fascinates people since it affords an opportunity, even physically, in human emotion of taking part in the experiences displayed on the stage. As Nicole bluntly put it "Inside the spectator there lurks always the actor." The emotion of sympathy referred to here,

(1) Art and Life. Bernard Hall. Lecture delivered, Art Gallery, S.A. (June 13, 1918).

(2) Art and Beauty of the South—a lecture by Wm. Morris, Oct. 13, 1881.

however, has nothing in common with aesthetic emotion—an ideal where nothing but the good of life enters into its texture of the beautiful. In that (2) field what charms one in the comic or stirs one in the sublime or touches one in the pathetic is wholly a glimpse of some good.

A work of art stimulates the elements of social happiness and vigour. All art to be truly great, to be permanent and fresh and satisfying, through generations must be moralised—it must be in harmony with those principles of condition, that tone of feeling, which it is the self-preserving instinct of civilised humanity to strengthen. Salt (1) it is well known, acts as a preservative, the components of the salt which preserve literature and art are interesting matter, sincerity and sanity of thought and feeling, truth to nature and simple luminous and beautiful expression.

### THE UTILITARIAN ASPECTS OF ART.

The painter of pictures is termed an artist, but not the maker of sewing machines. The architect is an artist, yet the man who makes the piano or the organ is only a skilful craftsman. An artificial line divides the poet, the musician, the painter, etc., from the artisans who make the things that are useful, even though they are beautiful. The Victorian train—"The Spirit of Progress", or an aeroplane, is both beautiful and useful, but neither is considered a work of art.

Art fulfils a utilitarian purpose. The conception of the artist is limited by the nature of available or procurable material, and thus is determined the scale and the special character of his work. The mind (3) of the designer is susceptible to current events—political, social and intellectual; and frequently events reflect and even crystallise current mentality.

Every work of art is intended to be used. Artists do not paint pictures for blind men; poets do not polish their sonnets for a non-appreciative public; musicians compose music and select harmonies for those who love music; architects erect structures for definite purposes, the sculptor does not merely produce his work for aesthetic estimates, nor do writers always write for the perennial attraction of the judicious reader. The artist, moreover, has to live and the economic side of his work has to be considered, but while the artist is a man and has economic needs from the time of St. Paul (4), the first

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(1) Judgment and Appreciation of Literature. (T. G. Tucker).

(2) Little Essays (George Santayana).

(3) Belphegor. (Julian Benda).

(4) A History of Aesthetic. (B. Bosanquet).

Christian artist down to the present day, the artist is a spiritual man; he possesses the inner secrets of ethics, philosophy and theology; he knows how to unite a sacred exhibition with scenes and events; he aims at perfection and delights in the forms and laws of creation. (1) Art is essentially inspirational and intuitive; it is also technical and planned, and to some extent at least, a structure of rational thinking. Man is drawn to art by his primary impulses—the desire to enjoy happiness. “Art moulds the life of dreams and shapes it into forms that enable men and women to achieve a greater consciousness, a profounder communication with life, stronger feelings, subtler intelligences and a more noble imagination.”

Art has an educational aspect that is often stressed, but sometimes in a manner which acts as a dis-service. The educational influence of the arts is all-persuasive. Thus by its aid the novelist creeps in closer to the child than the parents; the picture teaches more than the schoolmaster; music awakens chords that stir the emotional element. An under-estimation of the importance of the arts is nearly always due to the ignorance of the workings of the mind.

“All art has no friendships, no jealousies, no hatreds, no enmities, no international politics,” says Sir Henry Newbolt. Its great (2) value lies in making people happy, first in practising the art, and then in possessing its product. The growth of the Fine Arts in a country is the reflex of the nation’s prosperity and the very flower of its civilisation. Yet an artist and his public should have reciprocal qualities. It is not sufficient for the artist to be cultivated and accomplished, the audience must be cultivated too. Familiarity with classical works increases appreciation, and to be a good listener is to possess a valuable acquisition.

When the world of art is entered discussion arises, various viewpoints are set forth, tastes differ, now one style or fashion dominates the tendency of a particular period, varied social ideals affect different groups, and even religious differences play a part; but battles and conflicts, divergence of opinion and opposing views must arise for if there were none the world would become static, and in such a world both art and morality would lose their meaning. The only drawback is that the development of artistic taste in the public, its “how” and “why” have scarcely received any attention at all.

Whitman maintained that the cardinal elements of natural greatness are robust character, independent personality, sincere

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(1) The Consecration of Genius. (Robert Seucourt).

(2) Little Essays drawn from the writings of G. Santayana.

religion. "Culture," he says, "does not form a manly personality. You can cultivate corn, roses and orchards, but who shall cultivate the primeval forest, the mountain peaks, the wide open ocean. The best culture will always be that of the manly and courageous instincts." Art however, is necessary for it civilises the race, and leads it on to try its skill, and inventive ability. Architecture, Sculpture and Painting present to people a visible history, a perpetual record of the noble deeds of the nation and the achievements of great men—a history that kindles the flame of patriotism and awakens in one a love of country. Literature (1) embodies every power of man, but the tradition of art is the tradition of life.

Love needs no ponderous words (2)  
No high philosophy;  
Enough the singing birds  
In the green tree.

Flowers fade and leave but a lingering memory; scenes of beauty change, and a confused mental picture of them survive; sunsets depart and their grandeur is forgotten, but art arrests the fleeting beauties. The painter's skill enables the memory to retain vivid pictures of the past; the artist's pencil presents to our gaze places we may never see in reality, yet are able to admire and enjoy when we observe the picture as supplied by the artist. Poetry says everything in man's own language to the mind, but art is man's desire for fidelity, the gratification of his sense of ingenuity, the vehicle of his wish for permanence, the faithful record of beautiful workmanship, the "sursum corda" which makes the veil between the temporal and the eternal grow extremely thin.

In oratory, the peroration represents the climax; in architecture, the majestic cathedral; in literature, the purple patch; in art, the exact copy of life. What the jewel is to the robe, the wine to the feast, the flower to the garden, the perfume to the rose, peace and love to the home, art is to life. Art spiritualises the common life of man, it brightens his outlook, and sanctifies all his activities. Art is the artist's way to further culture, and the cultured people are the canonised elect in the church of world-wisdom—aestheticism.

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(2) Song for Lovers. (T. I. Moore).

(1) Little Essays drawn from the writings of G. Santayana.

## AUSTRALIAN ART.

Although the story of Art has had a long and interesting history in Australia, the purpose of this essay is to draw attention to a few movements in its artistic career rather than to enter into a lengthy exposition of the men and women—the artists who were responsible for its artistic aesthetic.

Drawings are extant of the arrival of Governor Phillip (1) in Sydney harbour, but Parkinson's work—"Two of the Natives of New Holland advancing to combat," is the first pictorial record made by an Englishman in Australia. Sydney Parkinson was the draughtsman on the Endeavour. Most of the early drawings of the Australian Coast were made by William Westall, the topographical draughtsman on Captain Flinders' boat, "The Investigator". Scientific recordings were pronounced in the first phase of the Sydney Settlement; over one thousand extant works of botanical and zoological value were produced before 1800. The unique nature of the flora and fauna was a source of delight and wonder to the earliest settlers.

William Moore in his book "The Story of Australian Art" (1934) says that Australian Art began in the period when Captain Cook in the Endeavour sailed along the East Coast of Australia. Sydney Parkinson one of his crew left 700 sketches and drawings. Moore's book is more a work of reference, but as a history it is not too satisfactory. De Libra gave a very accurate account of Australian Art in the "Australian Art Review" (1899). Professor Sizer (2) also produced an historical account of Australian Art, but, in the main, little attention has been given to its history, and practically no attempt has been made to deal with its philosophy.

When the new arrivals in Australia first analysed its landscape, they became aware of something wholly different from anything they had ever seen before. They beheld trees of great size and of many varieties; the gum-tree fascinated them with its peculiar shape, as it grew out of sand, rocks, loam, clay, gravel, swamps, etc. In each case its form was different, its bark peculiar, its limbs, leaves, texture, and density, all varied. A picture by a convict named Watling (3) made in 1794, and said to be the earliest painting done in Australia shows the effort of a man of some natural ability in readjusting his perplexed mind to the vexed reports of his eye.

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(1) Journal of R.A.H.S. Magazine, 1923.

(2) Magazine of Art, 1901; Art News, 1941.

(3) Place, Time and Tradition. ( B. Smith).

Art comment was quite neglected in early Australia up to the year 1840. Art before that date served science, in the form of topographic and botanical drawings, or it served the patronage of a few, who paid the artist handsomely for portraits or pictures of romantic landscape. Before 1840 artists saw everything in Australia with European eyes and their work by no means had become the subject of literary contemplation. Dr. John Lhotsky, a visiting Polish Scientist was probably the first to criticise art in Australia, when he wrote an article for the English Art Journal, July 1839, entitled, "The State of Art in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land."

Conrad Martens who arrived in Sydney 1835, was one of the greatest artists of the Colonial period, and his success in delineating the scenery of New South Wales was remarkable; his paintings also were greatly appreciated by his contemporaries. Other artists contemporary with Martens were B. Chevalier, Prout, Terry, C. Hern, S. Glover and a few others, who were associated in contributing their part to early Australian art.

According (1) to Lionel Lindsay early Australian drawings were mainly topographical. Even Martens, from whom the aesthetic note is first heard, is concerned with the vista and the claims of place. The early men, however, had been given a good training in artistic work and followed a sound tradition.

Schools of Art and Mechanic's Institutes were set up in Sydney (1833), Melbourne (1840), Hobart Town (1849) and they were responsible for the diffusion of scientific knowledge, for developing critical comment, for distributing books, for imparting instruction in mathematics and the classics, for cultivating minds, for the development of the aesthetic sense, for a new form of class education that aimed at transforming the face of the world. Those institutes, in short, were a part of the universal demand for adult education, a desire to blend industrial arts, rural pursuits, fine art and intellectual activity, all for the common good. They were the first bodies in existence in Australia to provide opportunity for discussion and criticism of the arts—to estimate their aesthetic value generally. Doctor Woolley, John Skinner Prout in Sydney, Redmond Barry in Melbourne and John West in Tasmania, were a few of the more prominent lecturers in the field of Art before 1860.

Until 1850 (2), Art in Australia remained a purely colonial matter. English traditions in a minor key, were reflected everywhere, even the criticism was due to English inspiration. The discovery of gold in 1851, gave art its first claim to national

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(1) Art in Australia. (John Fairfax and Sons).

(2) Place. Taste and Tradition. (B Smith).

characteristics. S. T. Gill by 1852 had produced twenty four sketches of gold-diggings in Victoria—he depicted every phase of the digger's life, and although he was not a first rate artist, still he was impressive; his work was Australian in content, even though the form had an English touch.

Adelaide Ironside (born 1831, Sydney) was Australia's first expatriate painter. In 1855 she met Ruskin in England, who advised her to go to Rome, where most of her important paintings were executed. In 1862 her pictures "The Marriage in Cana of Galilee", and "The Pilgrim of Art", were shown at the London Exhibition, and later on, were brought to Australia. Adelaide belonged to the aesthetic movement in art which was then emerging into public consciousness.

In 1849 (1) Seven Lectures delivered at the Hobart Mechanic's Institute were published, and four of them related directly to the Fine Arts. The lecture by Samuel Prout Hill on "The Principles of Taste", was the first lecture on aesthetics published in Australia. "The perception of the Beautiful as an Element in Civilisation" by John Lillie was the second lecture delivered in the Hobart Institute, and later on published, while two other lectures were also published by B. Duterrace and Dr. Bedford. John Skinner Prout (2) in 1845 arranged the first exhibition of pictures in Australia in the Legislative Council Chambers of Hobart, and the success of the exhibition led to the erection of a picture gallery, by Robin V. Hood—the first in Australia.

Schiller and the German Romantics held that art was an active moral agent directing men's thoughts to the higher state of goodness and harmony, and that idea became prevalent in Australia from 1850 onwards, but Evangelism which aimed at making art a moral agent made as much impression in Australia as in England. Evangelism made little permanent effect upon the actual production of art.

In the seventies the growing interest in historical pictures was partly responsible for the establishment of art galleries in Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia. For nearly a century, however, Australia was dominated by English traditions and whatever operated in England 19th century art served likewise as an impulse in Australia.

A distinct Australian nationalism in art made a humble beginning in the sixties and seventies, but it had to resist the pressure of the Royal Academy, academic romanticism,

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(1) Place, Taste and Tradition. (Bernard Smith).

(2) Ibid.

sentimentalism, the finical precision of the pre-Raphaelites, and the utilitarian doctrine which had invaded the field of aesthetics with disastrous results.

Australian Impressionism was a reaction from the academic traits just mentioned, and its break from the traditional method took place in the realm of landscape. The work of three men—Eugene von Guerard—a Viennese, Lucien Henry, and Louis Buvelot made the break complete from the purely European approach of earlier artists. Some of Buvelot's paintings e.g. "Yarra Valley", and "Waterfall at Coleraine", showed that he understood the Australian atmosphere, and made him indirectly a fore-runner of the Heidelberg School.

Curiously enough, among the artists who helped to mould Australian Art were many who were not Australian, e.g. Louis Buvelot was a Swiss painter, E. P. Fox was a Jew, Nerli was an Italian Count, Hans Heysen was a German, Elioth Gruner was an Irish-Norwegian, G. Lambert an Anglo-American, von Guerard an Austrian, and so on.

The Art Society (1) of New South Wales was founded in 1879, and its first exhibition was held in 1880. The Society began with a list of working members of 88 and with 50 honorary and subscribing members. Pictures sent in for exhibition in 1888 were destroyed by fire. The Insurance Company paid over £3,000 for the loss sustained by the Society, and the artists concerned received 15/1 in the £1. One by one the strong young birds in the Australian art nest felt their wings and began to soar aloft. Many of them feeling too cramped in their native environment flew away to London and Paris for wider artistic flights and experiences.

Australian Art, according (2) to an authority, was born in the eighties and spent its youth in the nineties. In 1880, some paintings were exhibited in Sydney, which gave evidence of a fair grasp of the significance of the unusual character of the Australian setting. Buvelot, a Swiss expatriate was one to recognise the beauty of the Australian tree forms, the silvery tones of the bush, and the peculiar features of the landscape. What Buvelot started, Roberts (3) developed, helped by McCubbin. Julian Ashton followed the same creed as Tom Roberts; Arthur Streeton then led the way, and for forty years his influence predominated in the artistic world. Conder's work, too, provided hints for Streeton and enabled him to show the Australians their own land as no one else could. Walter Withers

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(1) Fifty Years of Australian Art, 1879-1929. (Geo. Galway).

(2) The Romantic Nineties. (A. W. Jose).

(3) Substance of a lecture by J. S. MacDonald.



and David Davies tried rural romances; John Ford Paterson preferred mountain and bush scenes; Sir John Longstaff and Penleigh Boyd gave their attention to the landscape, while Max Meldrum and W. B. McInnes revived the drooping vitality of touch values and made their followers accept their teachings.

J. W. Curtis (1) a landscape artist, who died in 1901, was one of the ablest, most sympathetic, and most poetical exponents of Australian Art. Curtis found his truest enjoyment in studying the pictorial aspects of the visible world. As a miniature-painter he was facile princeps. The Curtis eye (1) beheld the infinite variety of earth's loveliness, and his mind was fully alive to the subtle charm which she reveals only to the poet and to the painter, or to those who have a just sense of beauty in their hearts. Sunrise and sunset, the grey dawn, the glow of the burning noon, the splendours of the golden sunset, the lovely recesses of silence and verdure hidden in the hills, the Queensland rivers during the last five years of his life, his interpretation of Australian landscape scenery gained steadily in power, sweetness and poetry. The more closely he interrogated nature, the more communicative and unreserved she became in her revelation, because he approached her as a purely disinterested and adoring worshipper. Michael Angelo at 90 echoed the declaration "I am still learning." Curtis, too, always felt that he still had much to learn.

A strong feeling of nationalism developed in Australia during the second half of the 19th century and reached its peak during the nineties. The growth was a realistic and a practical one; an impressionist technique characterised it, and Girolama Nerli, an Italian by birth, introduced it to the artists of Sydney about 1889. Julian Ashton also espoused the cause of the Australian Impressionists. Streeton went to Sydney in 1889, Roberts in 1887, E. P. Fox, about 1892. Fox, as a leading Impressionist, made his canvases include some of the finest painting done in Australia. Impressionism with its statement of visual truth and its record of colour, atmosphere and light, undermined the English tradition that had flourished in Australia, practically from the beginning of the century.

Tom Roberts introduced plein-air painting into Australia; he also pitched the tonal range of his landscape in a far higher key than any of his predecessors. Roberts, McCubbin and Charles Conder, a colorist of genius, formed what was known as the Heidelberg School, and they were responsible for the early development of Impressionism. The School of Impressionists was founded by Edouard Marek (1833-83), but the older Spanish School helped its development. As a stimulus Im-

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(1) An Appreciation by James Smith.

pressionism appreciates the significance of a principle—the principle of omission. Let the image supply the rest, the form can be disregarded. The greatest possibility for this study lay in the field of landscape painting. Impressionism is really a disregard for form and for many years this kind of painting held sway in Australia. The Impressionists held an exhibition in Melbourne in August 1889, and met with great success.

Impressionism in the eighties in the paint box of Tom Roberts, made a convert of Arthur Streeton, who with Charles Conder founded the nearest thing to a distinct local school Australia has yet had. They concentrated on the painting of light and atmosphere, on mood and effect; they were not too concerned with form, they drew around them some older painters—David Davies, Fred McCubbin and Walter Withers. They freed the land from the exile taint and gave Australia a sentiment of its own; such painters were responsible for Australia's artistic aesthetic. Impressionism, too, had a double significance; it freed landscape painting from academic shackles, and opened up what was practically virgin country to the painter's brush. Impressionism remained dominant in Australia for fifty years.

The form of landscape inaugurated by Roberts and Streeton became the dominant influence in Australian landscape, and gave rise to a distinct school of Australian Impressionist painting. Other Impressionists were Rupert Bunny, Hugh Ramsay, George Lambert and Max Meldrum, but these four were more of the academic Impressionist type. George W. Lambert occupied a high position in Australian painting. As a teacher he insisted that his students should learn their craft thoroughly. Lambert left Australia in 1900 for Europe, and while there studied widely. In his pencil portraits he revealed his mastery, while his portraits in oil were always of a high standard. As a sculptor he achieved great skill, and on his return to Australia, he worked hard as a painter and all that he accomplished represented style, dignity, skill, integrity and beauty, but in the line of portraiture his reputation was greatest.

It might be noted, too, that Arthur Streeton was among the small band of Australians who gained recognition for Australian art in the older civilisations of the world. Lionel Lindsay says: "There is a gaiety, a lightness in Streeton's work, which is in the Australian sunlight itself—his work is a truthful and beautiful rendering of the light, and colour and beauty of Australia."

The atmosphere which has always impregnated the landscape of Australia at first baffled the artists, until they learned to sense it and love it—then only could they recreate it on

canvas or on paper. Years of artistic acclimatisation and the gradual acquisition of a sense of personal appreciation of the land were needed to make a sympathetic rendering of it. The conquest of the landscape also presented a problem to the first artists.

The early artists painted from drawings and notes sophisticated form and generalising colour, so that they missed the essential character of the Australian landscape, its light and atmospheric colour, only to be obtained by direct painting. The gum tree puzzled and dismayed them. It took the artists some time to understand that Australian landscape required a high tonal scheme. Roberts and Streeton were the first to heighten the pitch of their tonal values. The form of landscape inaugurated by these two became the dominant influence in Australian landscape.

Sydney Long recognised the hidden beauties of the Australian bush. Salvana pointed out the beauties of the Blue Mountains; Ford Paterson found himself "at home" among the Gippsland gums, while Lister Lester saw in the bush what no other eye has ever seen. Other painters noted were Charles Bryant (1) who depicted the moods of the sea, Hans Heysen the trees, Max Meldrum indoor and outdoor studies, B. E. Minns the aborigines, and G. W. Lambert, a versatile artist, developed the Austral landscape and seasons with their accessory animals, birds, trees and flowers. Hans Heysen did for landscape what George Lambert did for portraiture and figure composition. Other landscape painters were Elioth Gruner, Penleigh Boyd, Howard, Julian Ashton, J. Muir and Harold Herbert. Julian Ashton was a great figure standing for the dignity of art, Lambert exalted form, Norman Lindsay was an illustrator of ideas or graphic incidents, while Miss Proctor was the type of artist that was interested in modes and costumes.

Roberts persuaded younger artists to leave their schools and studios and paint out-of-doors, with the result that artists' colonies grew up, and such men insulated themselves to an extent from values and influences inimical to their art, and thus a new phase in art began in Australia; this was the beginning of Australian aestheticism as an important formative agent, influencing the production of art. From 1900 aestheticism was in the air gleaned from the attitudes of such men in Europe like Whistler, Beardsley and Oscar Wilde. Men in Australia like Norman Lindsay and Charles Conder were among the aesthetes who followed the European doctrines, but both George Lambert and Max Meldrum eschewed the "art-for-art-sake" approach.

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(1) Australian National Review, 1/9/38 (Fred MacDonald).

While it is recognised that the artist does not work on order like the manufacturer, but that he does a large part of his work for the artist's sake, still as he is a prophet in a sense, he must be free to work as the spirit moves him.

Artists, as a distinct group in the Australian community—came into existence during the eighties, as has been shown, and with them, we note the development of aestheticism. Tom Roberts, according to R. H. Croll, was Australia's first revolutionary artist, for he revolted from the aesthetic practices of his day, and the aesthetic evaluations then in vogue. Evaluation up to his time dealt mostly with the sentimental genre, historical and "heroic" painting, and religious subjects; it was also held that art should exercise a definite moral influence; it should educate in uprightness and build character; "art for art's sake" found little sympathy. Furthermore, the urge for expression through one's art and for the mere sake of expression, is a factor which cannot be wholly controlled and which should not be ignored. (1) "Even at this stage of my student years," Lambert wrote, "I joined whole-heartedly the religious few whose ritual included the creed that it was not the one achievement, the one egg, the one talent, that mattered two whoops in hell, but the carrying on from day to day and the skill that made all casual improvements and minor perfections merely subordinate parts of a really fine, solid structure."

In 1913, a new movement in the artistic world known as Post-Impressionism made its appearance due to Roland Wakelin. Cezanne's influence was also noted in the movement. About 1914-1918 Post-Impressionism made a beginning in Sydney, due to the study of photographs and prints of the works of Cezanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin, De Mestre and Wakelin. Nora Simpson, Grace Smith, Thea Proctor and Margaret Preston became enthusiastic advocates for the Post-Impressionism theory. In 1925 the movement spread to Melbourne due to George Bell, who became the guiding spirit, while Arnold Shore and William Frater helped the cause and Modernism grew in numbers and influence.

G. W. Lambert from 1920 was an impelling influence in the Australian circle suggestive of a change. A definite school in Sydney owed its origin to him, and his influence on Elioth Gruner, John Moore and Daryl Lindsay was such as to make them his ardent disciples. The Second (1) phase of Modernism began when modified forms of Cubism and Constructivism became noticeable in the work of Australian artists. Rah Fizelle, Grace Crowley, Eric Wilson and Frank Hinder were the chief

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(1) Art in Australia, February 1st, 1922.

representatives of the movement. Australian art although largely derivative has become almost as complex as contemporary art in Europe or in America..

The increasing interest in the later phases of Modernism, Cubism, Constructivism, Sur-realism, etc., led to the formation of the Contemporary Art Society in Melbourne in 1938, although R. G. Menzies, Harold Herbert, Max Meldrum and others were strongly opposed to it. The formation represented the maturing of the new developments over a number of years.

The progress of art never ceases, new names of artists come on the scene, apparent strange styles make their appearance, fresh movements, e.g., a reaction from abstraction, make themselves felt. Recent names (1) in the Australian art list are William Dobell, Russell Drysdale, Donald Friend, Elaine Haxton, Vladimir Bergner, Joshua Smith and Noel Counihan. These names represent a most important group of contemporary painters, but it would not be wise to classify them all under the present art movement—the Resurgence of Realism.

The growth of realism in Australia is the present characteristic of its art—the development shows an interest in character, in social types and contemporary life. The realist represents by selection a world of visible things; he portrays what is significant in contemporary life; he presents experiences which have an objective significance; and he pictures his own time; just the same as the historian tells the story of the past. The realist reveals social truths, he indicates social reality, he caricatures at times, he presents humour, interpretation of character, etc., in fact, he shows "That (2) art remains the only way possible of speaking truth."

Occasionally an Art Show in the main centres of artistic influence is held and painters present landscapes, street scenes, flower pictures, portraits, etc., etc. Some of the pictures are in oils, others appear in water-colours and some of the landscape impressions retain a pleasant outdoor refreshing charm. The structural forms and tonal values in every case are carefully observed and painted; an endless variety of subjects is presented by nature and enables each artist to break away from the repetition of the usual favourite subjects, and to utilise whatever in nature appeals to him.

Art in Canada (3) had an earlier foundation than in Australia, yet it encountered big difficulties in creating an art of its own. Canadian artists for a long period saw everything

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(1) Place, Taste and Tradition. (Bernard Smith).

(2) Robert Browning.

(3) A Short History of Canadian Art. (G. McInnes).

through European eyes and the wider world kept them from attending to their own country. In 1880 the National Gallery of Canada was founded, and its appearance helped in a marked way the development of Canadian art. Australia has every reason to be proud of its progress in the art line. Some of its artists were brilliant men whose torch early lost its fire; others spent their lives dipping their brush into the common things of life; others by their drawings showed the artists' conscious search after truth, their tireless interrogation of form, their appeal not to the intelligence merely but to the whole soul of man.

The art mediums of pencil, charcoal, pen, ink, etching, wood and lino-cutting have seldom lacked exponents. The work of the first Australian sculptor was often capably modelled. Busts of officials and early settlers composed the output of these artists. John Simpson Mackennal, Charles Summers, Charles Francis Summers, the son, and J. S. Mackennal's son—Sir Bertram Mackennal attained world fame as sculptors. Craft-work has always occupied an important place in Australian creative art. Sculpture, too, has gone the way of all other arts, and has learnt to suggest more than it says, to embody dreams in its flesh, to become at once a living thing and a symbol.

At present easy international communication makes possible an almost instant comparison of the ever-changing and diverse schools of art-theory and practice—an asset which has accrued from the modern progress of scientific invention. The ability to discover quickly a style of painting in vogue in another country often tends to imitate that style, neglecting the inspirational source which led to it. The interchange of pictures between countries is also fertile in beneficial results; the exchange of aesthetic view-points is good in itself. Australia has sent many pictures to United States for exhibition purposes, and although the two countries have similar physical conditions, and similar economic conceptions and the same outlook on life, the former's aesthetic contribution since 1880 is significant, and is as brilliant and inspiring as were the deeds of her troops on the field of battle.

From a physiographical, economic, political, and social point of view Australia makes a great impression on visitors and immigrants from other lands. The following quotation shows the impression one man at least received during his visit.

"Australia (1) gave me the best time I have ever known and far more friendships and faith in friendships and and belief in an ordered world of constant and in-

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(1) *Dancing Round the World.* (L. Haskell).

telligent peace of mind parallel to the emotional calm; but Australia itself gave me something more precious, a rare state of complete inner contentment and harmony. Away from it I shall ever be haunted by the white gum and the wattle, by the twisted and charred shapes of burnt wood and by the green shoots that seem to grow phoenix-like from death itself."

Visitors and immigrants will also soon recognise that Australia is a country of culture, and that its aesthetic—artistic and literary is of a very high order. The Australian artists' bid to pre-eminence, and even to immortality, is due to their high ideals, the manner of the presentation of their work, their conception of the artists' position in their art, their recognition of the spirit of adventure as being an essential ingredient in their artistry; that the themes they try and the pictures they paint, bear the impress of their creating personality, and finally, that they appreciate (1) the recorded praise of their contemporaries in their efforts to achieve universality of appeal.

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(1) *Art and Common Sense.* (S. C. R. Smith).

## CHAPTER EIGHT.

### ARCHITECTURE AND MUSIC.

#### ARCHITECTURE.

##### INTRODUCTION

Any particular (1) art, says the writers, is not an independent manifestation of human creative instinct, but is one aspect of a general creative activity, the character of which is determined by man's metaphysical attitude. Architecture exercises a definite effect on other arts, and as a result, it has earned the title of the mistress art.

The history of architecture belongs to modern years. In the 19th century enquiries began into the architecture of the nations outside the sphere of Western Europe, to ascertain in what way their new forms were evolved; how their architectural forms advanced as their civilization progressed, for architecture is the most imposing of the arts of form; the relation of the ideal to material considerations calls forth its finest expression, but utility alone plays only a subordinate part in its theory. Dynamic expression of human thought is the main-spring of aesthetic inspiration as opposed to the utilitarian outlook. The study of architecture is the study of the history of the race. Side-by-side with man's development, his skill in building and his knowledge of the designer's art, have been manifested.

Architecture has an age-long origin—it dates back to the days of Egypt. Then for hundreds of years the Greeks dominated the architectural world, and made it flower with beauty, until it transmitted its spirit to Western Civilization, and then the Romans held sway and to show their power and glory, erected temples, basilicas, theatres, baths, triumphal arches, pillars of victory, aqueducts, bridges, etc., some of which as ruins remain to this day.

The Byzantine followed the Roman period, then the Gothic, and in the 13th century the full glory of the Western Architecture found expression in the great cathedrals of Europe. The Renaissance, followed by the Baroque, brought the development of architecture up to modern days. Each phase of development added something to the general stock of architectural beauty. The Greeks bestowed on it refinement and grace; the Romans added magnificence, expressive of a great military power; the Byzantine produced a more stylistic form and the cupola became notable. Christianity favoured a new style, while religion, animated by the spirit of emulation, produced a

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(1) The Art of Architecture. (A. E. Richardson & H. O. Corfiato).



constructive skill which led by degrees to the final flowering of the Gothic, the most inspiring architecture ever produced by the human mind.

The Renaissance in the 15th century supplanted the Gothic architecture of mediaeval Europe—a movement which added old forms to fresh purposes. To classical scholarship was added the vivid imagination of the individual designer. The Renaissance in Europe passed through several stages, and eventually became the vehicle for the rhetorical Baroque. The 19th century due to intensified industrialism and utilitarian principles encouraged breakaways from tradition, and the policy of uniform architecture, and probably less attractive designs, became fashionable. In the 20th century, too, the use of steel and reinforced concrete, the new avenues of design and varied forms of architecture were explored, and under the heading of modernism, new styles of construction made their presence felt in the cities and suburbs, while in the country, residences were erected in keeping with the general trend of the period.

As imaginative thought is the driving power in man, a building to be a work of art and to possess an aesthetic must show the triumph of mind over matter, of spirit over material. The progressive idealism of mankind always asserts itself. Stability, convenience and beauty are primary essentials to excellence in building, while perfection of arrangement in the various parts produces both character and charm.

Australia was affected by the architectural movements in Europe, but England, in particular, supplied her with models, while the educated public taste that Christopher Wren was instrumental in directing, was not without effect in the architectural work of the early settlement under the Southern Cross.

### AUSTRALIAN ARCHITECTURE.

Architecture in Australia had a humble beginning—so humble that taste, design, and beauty were not even thought of—utility was the sole concern. In 1788 the canvas hut, the wattle and daub structure, the wooden make-shift, the mud hut were amongst the first buildings erected in and around Sydney.

Buildings in New South Wales were miserable constructions until the time of Governor Macquarie. The buildings erected by him were generally regarded with admiration. Whatever he accomplished was done in a generous style, and his structures indicated that his foresight viewed Sydney, not as a village but as a future city. Macquarie had the advantage of having an architect—Francis Greenway, and he used him as a willing

and artistic instrument. With his aid and noble vision, he erected numerous buildings in and around Sydney; he was also instrumental in constructing buildings in Tasmania.

Macquarie's example was not lost on the early colonists, and as a result many beautiful homes were erected; "Piona", "Horseley", "Tusculum" and hundreds of others were among the most beautiful ones that appeared, but "Cleveland House", at the corner of Bedford and Buckingham Streets, opposite the old Exhibition Building, built in 1811, by Major Cleveland, illustrated the solid architecture of the Macquarie era. In 1832 the present "Newington House" was erected, and that building became the typical type of the old colonial mansion with its beautiful portico—supported by fourteen perfectly cut pillars—each pillar was a solid piece of stone. In that colonial mansion the squire of Newington—John Blaxland, entertained lavishly the prominent people of the rapidly rising colony.

It is interesting to note the changes that took place in a growing city. Sydney, 1948, compared with Sydney, 1848, makes a fascinating study. Pictures of a century ago showing the progress that has been made in any of the Australian capitals, indicate the architectural trends of the different epochs. Every epoch had its style, and a critical eye discerns approximately when a building was erected. The bluestone in Victoria of one hundred years ago, was replaced by a lighter stone or brick, and the presence of more glass and wider verandahs showed that Australia was moving away from English standards to suit its own. The remarkable thing about Australian cities was the rapidity with which they developed.

A Jewish (1) visitor to early Sydney about 1850 remarked "This great city is as fine as other beautiful ones in Europe. The buildings are in European style; the shops are full of good things; there are many parks and gardens in and about the city where one can breathe the pure air; the inhabitants number 100,000. Yet another visitor in 1863 writes (2) "What strikes the visitor to Australia is the inappropriateness to the climate of most of the buildings, the absence of cool arcades in the streets, the verandah, practically a *sine qua non*, is missing. Open spaces and squares in the city i.e. Sydney do not figure as they should."

Australia as it progressed, produced buildings in accordance with its philosophy of the time. Melbourne erected many ornate public constructions during the late seventies and the early

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(1) Early Jewish Magazine.

(2) Article by F.S.P. The Colonial Monthly. Vol. I, 1868.

eighties. Collins St., Melbourne, became remarkable for the beauty of its banks, its offices, its professional quarters and its wonderful array of business blocks.

"In Australia (1) the ideas of other countries will not help; they must be our own—born of our own necessities, our own climate, our own method of pursuing health and happiness. In civil architecture a well defined natural characteristic will be noticed suiting our climate and general conditions. In domestic architecture originality may be expected, horizontal lines will be emphasised, and elegant simplicity stressed. Australia possesses a wealth of building materials—marble, granite, all classes of stone, and every variety of timber." Sir William Chambers believed that materials in architecture are like words in phraseology; separately they have little power, yet when combined with skill and expressed with energy, they actuate the mind with unbounded sway.

In architecture there are many by-paths and cross-roads; there are many major highways and minor roads, and nearly all the roads that are connected with one-another, appear at first to be just as good as the main road, and often appear a little more important. Architecture is like misfortune, inasmuch as talking and writing about it, do not make it any better, thought and action alone are needed. Today architecture is so adulterated by buildings for purely utilitarian purposes, that in the majority of instances, the art ceases to show any signs of existence at all.

Climatic distinction, building materials of a distinctive character, the requirements of life, business and habits should all play a part in the development of architecture, but art depends on the spiritual character of a period to a greater degree than to exact observance of prevalent material conditions. It is necessary, too, to considere tradition in the erection of a building, not in the sense of imitation but in an understanding of principles of construction, established by experience and determination by materials, and by adapting such principles to new uses and discoveries.

In building we have the problem of aesthetics, which means the organisation of mass, line, colour, and texture much as the notes of music are organised into a purposeful composition. The artist is the interpreter of contemporary trends, and a good design carries the germ of its own development, whether in art or in literature. No building is necessarily beautiful because it is convenient or durable, or vice-versa. The secret is balance, or more particularly, balance with a purpose.

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(1) Australian Architecture (R. J. Haddon).

There are many mediums through which architecture can wield the charm of beauty unadorned—"Given (1) the artistic instinct, the builder can summon to his aid the subtle power of proportion, the fascination of line, the stirring appeal of parts harmoniously blended into an organic whole, the enchantment of masses so broken up as to defy monotony without any suggestion of unrest, the poetic stimulus of perspective and the spell of light and shadow play."

The Australian in his home insists on comfort, utility, outlook, suitable position and agreeable environment; he also demands decorative charm, both externally and internally; simplicity and taste characterise the whole. In the public buildings a few lonely craftsmen keep the torch of aesthetic building alive, and while in some cases the grandeurs of the past are missed in the construction line, yet today buildings lovely, lyrical, and fuller of noble conceits are found everywhere. In each age the designers express different ideas—one age builds for security, another to express the mystery of faith, a third for utilitarian purposes, and a fourth to present to beholders beauty as well as utility. The artist is only concerned with the creation of beautiful things, and when he finds a well-informed and intelligent public opinion in a town or a country, it is easy to explain his architectural methods and to induce the public to take greater interest in the buildings in which they live, or the ones that their successors will inherit.

The aesthetic influence in architectural work is most pronounced. If a work suggests spiritual environment, then it is a work of art. When architecture displays grace and every human quality whether in stone, brick or concrete, it becomes expressive and alive, it bears a spiritual message comparable to a communication from the firmament.

The architecture of a country denotes the state of its civilisation. Manning Robertson (2) remarked that if we visited another planet, the first question asked on our return would be what the inhabitants looked like, and what sort of dwellings did they live in. The Australian people tend slightly to the utilitarian ideal in building, but it cannot be admitted that the aesthetic impulse is weak. However, better results would be secured, if any architecture in the national scheme of education had not been left out in the cold.

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(1) Outline of English Architecture. (A. H. Gardiner).

(2) Laymen and the New Architecture. (Manning Robertson).

## MUSIC.

### INTRODUCTION.

If art is the *pons asinorum* of the philosopher, music is that of the aestheticians says Cecil Gray (1). From the very outset music has been a problem and an enigma to thinkers. Unlike the other arts, music seemingly neither represents nor imitates anything. At first sight it seems to have no direct contact with life, and no direct relation with any of its sister arts. Walter Pater (2) gave expression to a theory of music that caused considerable discussion in the literature of art criticism, namely that music is the measure of all the arts—"All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music." He meant that it is in music that we find the ideal conditions for the production of the quality of beauty. Although each Fine Art has its own sphere, yet it is through music (3), because of its unique nature that the essence of the aesthetic experience is capable of being aroused in its purest form.

The art of music and that of landscape painting are wholly independent both of aesthetic theory and of Hellenic example, but no art compares with music in universal acceptance and practice as an art. It appeals directly to the emotions and through them to the intellect.

Music gives one the expression ideal of a genuine social life. It represents no cold geometrical design, no motionless mosaic; it is not fixed and rigid, but moves along its course with the harmonious interchange of richest life singing its way, as it were, in a scale of joy. Music proclaims the interdependence of soul life and its only possible growth by means of increased correspondence and enrichment of inter-relativity. The binding and unifying art of music contributes to the vital aspect of society. Music is the health of the heart. If we could but argue musically, says an authority, truth would fall upon us like the dew of heaven, calmly and without the canker of dissent, and paradoxically it is the expression of the inexpressible. What love is to the moral realm, music is to the region of the beautiful.

Christianity (4) gave the world a new sense of pity and of love, and created a sense of the spiritual value of every living soul, but music is aesthetic idealism; it is the art in which matter is most completely subordinate to spirit; its arrival meant that a new aesthetic force was born into the world.

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(1) The History of Music. (Cecil Gray)

(2) The Renaissance. (Walter Pater).

(3) The Beautiful in Music. (Max Schoen)

(4) Hermaia (Cohn McAlpin)

Musical aesthetic began with Plato, and he attributed to music an even greater subversive power than to any of the other arts. Aristotle's outlook on art stands in strange contrast to that of Plato—he represents an advance. Greek and Roman aesthetes before the Christian era, regarded music as a mere empty sensual pleasure by itself, they preferred the tread of rhythm. Music for Plotinus was an inferior art, and the ear a less noble organ than the eye. Christian thinkers regarded music as an expressive art. St. Thomas Aquinas called it "the first among the seven arts, and the noblest of all sciences." This pre-eminence of music lasted throughout the Middle Ages. Up to the Renaissance it was regarded supreme among the arts. With the Renaissance a change came, and music was regarded merely as a pleasant sensation. In the beginning of the 18th century music held a very low place among the arts, but in the 19th century, its position was changed, and it ranked high, due to Schopenhauer, who proclaimed its absolute supremacy "Music," he maintained, "was the metaphysical to everything physical in the world, and the thing in itself to every phenomenon. It expresses in a perfectly universal language, in a homogeneous material, mere tones and with the greatest determinateness and truth, the inner nature, the in-itself of the world."

Music transports an individual into a different world; it is the purest art of pleasure, the truest paradise and playground of the spirit; it also opens to people the door of beauty; "it takes them to that realm where Truth, Goodness, and Beauty reside in their elements." It is the glory of music that we cannot put into the framework of language, what it has signified or disclosed. Beethoven was quite deaf, when he composed some of his greatest symphonies—works of supreme genius, that disclosed all the secrets of the Beautiful in sound, and yet he, the composer, was not able to hear them.

The written poem, the carved statue, the painted wall or canvas, are the works themselves; they speak for themselves, they represent to the individual something definite, but the case of the musical score is different. It was the problem, of notation that stood in the way of the old music. Music, too, often depends on the personal elements, thus Berlioz holds a unique position in the history of music. His followers were wildly enthusiastic about his merits; his admirers considered him as the greatest composer that ever lived; on the other hand, many regarded him with open hostility.

Music (1) throws open the prison doors of the soul and bids it take wing. In song and music the very heart flows out more effectively than through the slower channels of the canvas, or of even lettered manuscripts.

(2) "Music will do everything in the hands of a genius—it can be purely tonal; it can be the means of moral improvement as in the works of Beethoven's middle period, and a metaphysical language in those of his last; it can be an instrument of psychological or physiological delineation; it can be the expression of emotion; it is physical, emotional, intellectual—a work of art appealing to the whole man, and not merely to a part of him."

Dr. Illingworth said that music is pre-eminently the Christian art—it gives the expressional ideal of a genuine social life.

It is possible that as much aesthetic pleasure can be obtained from a fugue or a symphony, as from a song or an opera; it is a different order of pleasure, but both are equally legitimate. To attempt to limit the scope of music to a single restricted field of activity, or to suggest that pure music is per se preferable to programme music, as so many musical aestheticians seek to do, is the merest preciosity.

The aesthetic centre about which the musical circle is described and the direction in which its greatest strength lies, consists in the expression of emotion rather than of thoughts, in the realisation of intangible moods rather than of concrete forms, in the depiction of ideality rather than of reality, and of an appeal to spirit rather than to sense. Hauslick has written the only tolerable complete system of musical aesthetic in existence. His conclusions, however, are somewhat biased or one-sided.

Sir Walford Davies (3) once suggested that a musical appeal could be regarded as consisting of four concentric circles, each enveloping the whole of the preceding circles, and also adding to it its own contribution. The first circle is the sensational appeal, the second the emotional, the third the intellectual, and the final the intuitional or real. If this classification can be applied to music, it can also be applied to the field of all art values.

In music, the drum-beat represents the sensational; the emotional is the effect e.g. The song, "The Rosary"; the intellectual exhibits the highest perfection of technique the mastery

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(1) Hermaia. (Colin McAlpin).

(2) Hermain. (Colin McAlpin).

(3) Music and Worship. (W. Davies)

of materials, and above all the aesthetic and poetic appeal; the intuitional is the complete effect the music has on one, the thoughts and the memory that remain.

Most of the world's greatest music has a connection with something outside of itself, some extraneous implication, either literary, pictorial, illustrative or psychological. If the work is not intelligible as music alone, constructed on its own purely musical principles apart from all external considerations, it falls short of perfection as a work of art. Music to be of permanent value must be the vehicle of an intelligent idea, the worth of which must determine to a great extent the artistic estimate of its mode of expression. As it is an artistic expression of the inner life, then to follow its ideal, it is necessary to learn to understand its language.

Music is no trifling or frivolous amusement, but a noble science and a beautiful art; it expands the intellect, refines the taste and elevates the moral and religious sentiments. C. S. Meyers says that music may be appreciated from its own inherent beauty, i.e. apart from its sensuous emotional or conative influences. For aesthetic enjoyment the attitude is one of detachment.

There are three articles (1) of the true faith regarding the signification of the great music of the world. 1. The form must be beautiful. 2. The beautiful form must express a beautiful personality. 3. If the music is instrumental it must be entirely self-contained. The supreme factor in all the greatest art of the world in the greatest music is personality. Many a man in the world of art has done beautiful work, work which will live and delight, yet it falls short of the supreme gift of the great ones of the earth. To judge of the rank of a man, we must test his greatest works by the measure of similar works to which the world has with one consent accorded the highest place. Not by his minor (2) productions; but by the supreme efforts of his glories must the creator of art be judged in order to award him his just rank. Does he thrill his listeners to their heart of hearts, does he exalt them beyond this earthly sphere by the majesty of his imagination? does he make them feel the agonising passion, the matchless sublimity, the divine melody which generally moves people as they listen to the choral music of Bach, or the oratorio of Mendelssohn, or Handel's Messiah?

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(1) Modern Tendencies and Old Standards in Musical Art. (J. A. Johnstone).

(2) Ibid.



## AUSTRALIAN MUSIC.

Australian Music had no traditional folk-song from which to build up a national school; it had few sing-songs in its early class-rooms; only odd teachers had a knowledge of instrumental music or a love for musical work and an inspiring personality to make others love it; there were not many opportunities for the cultivation of good taste in music, differentiating between the light, easy, catchful, tuneful, commercial, popular music of the day, and the serious music, that fades not as the fashions change, "that (1) is more than a mere pastime for idle hours, but something that supplies an endless source of pleasure, joy, hope and inspiration, to most people, for a life-time." With Australia's political economic development in the thirties and forties, frequent references to the establishment of musical centres, to the holding of concerts, to the teaching of singing, the formation of choral societies etc., are found in the early history of New South Wales.

Music played a big part in the history of cultural Australia for as it has been previously remarked many of the early settlers were cultured people and, whenever possible, they showed an interest in music. Sir Geo. Bowen, the first Governor of Queensland (1860), was astounded with what he discovered in many of the homes of the squatters of his colony. Although it is commonly believed that any nation which has an enormous territory and a big population is, ipso facto, a great power, with commerce and commercial pursuits the deity, with literature and science, art and philosophy contemptuously thrown aside as follies, with the people wholly dedicated to the interests of wealth; still it would not be just or correct to level such a charge against the Australians, for in many things, particularly in the musical world, ample evidence supports the view that the people of Australia have not neglected the call of the arts or the culture of the spiritual. Music since the year 1850 has not been neglected under the Southern Cross.

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(1) Music and Boyhood. (Thos. Wood).

Teachers of music are quite aware of its aesthetic appeal, for music has effects and moods, intellectual and psychological. It is a source and a factor of enjoyment; its presence in a home does much to establish a cultural atmosphere, as well as to benefit the home, socially and spiritually, for music is for the musically uncultured audience as well as for the cultured one. The cultured audience will demand operatic selections; for others even the strange or bizarre presents a strange fascination. Cultured people in the home often welcome new movements in art, or are ready to hail a novel school of painting or poetry as supreme, if its merit makes it worthy of consideration. Musical appreciation, however, is easier to awaken than poetical appreciation, while the social significance of the former is often far-reaching.

It is not necessary to supply instances of the development of music in Australia; a few examples are selected to show that the people as a whole approve of its presence in their midst, and that their patronage of good music indicates the quality of their musical taste, in short—their musical aesthetic.

The Philharmonic Society in Melbourne gave its first performance of *Elijah* on June 23rd, 1857, in the Old Exhibition building, when Melbourne was scarcely twenty years old. The Society (1) was formed on October 8th, 1853, and among the founders were W. H. Dredge, W. Peterson, David Mitchell, the father of Dame Nellie Melba and W. H. Williams, a noted tenor and printer. The first president of the Society was Sir Redmond Barry, (Acting Chief-Justice at the time) and the first conductor was John Russell.

Melbourne in 1853 possessed a fair amount of musical talent and the Philharmonic Society under Mr. Russell performed many of the great musical compositions, as well as providing a fair number of orchestral works. Many notable singers, local and from abroad, performed as soloists in the productions of *Elijah*, held each year, e.g., Madame Fanny Simonsen, Madame Florence Austral, Madame Clara Butt, Browning Mummery, John Brownlee and Harold Williams.

Throughout a long career of almost one hundred years the Philharmonic Society has had only eight conductors. The present conductor is Professor Sir Bernard Heinze; the Society due to his efforts ranks high in the musical world.

A second instance will illustrate the Australians' attitude to music. "A soul-stirring (2) ceremony connected with the

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(1) The Argus, September, 1946.

(2) The Story of the Australian People. (J. N. Rawlings)

inauguration of the Melbourne International Exhibition was the performance of the opening cantata. The poem was composed by a Collingwood man—I. W. Meaden and the musician was Mr. Leon Caron. The Chorus of the opening day consisted of 1,000 voices and an instrumental band of 200 first-class performers: these with the Grand Exhibition Organ constituted an army of musical talent. The Cantata represented Victoria roused from her sleep amidst primeval forests and solitude, becoming engaged in all types of pursuits to become Queen of the South."

The names of the musicians, singers, musical artists, etc., in the musical history of Australia from 1834 (1) when the first opera "The Maid of Milan" was staged in Sydney, and when in 1836 W. V. Wallace gave the early colonists their first musical treat "Maritana", will be omitted; it will suffice to report that in 1861, the opera was firmly established in Melbourne by Saurin Lyster, and that eminent singers, artists and musicians have made Australia famous. Madame Melba became a world-wide artist and gave to humanity a new glamour in vocal interpretive art; Ada Crossley as a contralto had no equal; Horace Stephens, the bass singer, Percy Grainger, the pianist, William Murdoch, also a pianist; Lemone, the flautist and a few others ranked as world famous artists. Today, in Australia, musical performers, composers and artists, minister to the cultured tastes and to the aesthetic levels of the appreciative music-lovers found all over the Commonwealth.

All the teachers of music, and the schools where music is taught, the Conservatoriums and the work they do, the concert platforms and the elevation of taste for which they are responsible, have all helped in the development of a musical aesthetic. Not only in the capital cities, but in every town, even in localities so small as to be termed villages, children learn music. Isolated towns like Dongarra, W.A. meant for the writer an agreeable surprise to find students so keen and teachers so efficient. In New Norcia Mission Station (W.A.), the writer came in contact with a composer whose inspired compositions are sung by church choirs in every part of Australia and even in Europe.

The orchestra, one of man's greatest achievements, the theatre, the philharmonic societies, the chambers, the schools and the church have all contributed a part in nurturing the spirit of the Australian man, in developing his culture and in raising his aesthetic estimate. The Australian Broadcasting

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(1) The Cambridge History of the British Empire. (Vol. VII.).

Commission has also helped, for the radio enables everyone to listen to the best in music, to develop a musical taste and appreciation, and to remove the impression that music is something selective for a privileged few.

Great artists like Melba, Percy Grainger, Florence Austral, Peter Dawson, William Murdoch, Alfred Hill, Amy Castles, Ada Crossley, Daisy Kennedy—names selected at random, have done much to raise the musical standard of the Australian People. The above names figure as world artists, but there has been no discontinuance in the list of singers, instrumentalists performers, artists, teachers, etc., in the musical line provided each year by the Australian people. Music is greatly appreciated in the Commonwealth. A programme of operas held in a Melbourne Theatre (1948) was attended by 160,000 people—many were unable to secure a “booking”, so keen were musical enthusiasts to be present at a performance more than once. Had the season lasted longer, an opportunity for thousands of disappointed patrons might have been given to enjoy the musical scores.

Melbourne in 1883 was regarded as a musical city. Chamber music, church choirs, oratorios, orchestras, band music, etc., were amongst the ways that musical appreciation was developed. From 1883 to the present day there has been no diminution in the keenness of the Australian people for music and for a fine percipience of the aesthetic. What is true of Melbourne applies equally to all capitals of the commonwealth. Some of the country towns like Geelong, Bendigo, Armadale, Warwick, Bathurst, Goulburn, are noted as being important musical centres.

Musical composition has not been neglected in Australia, but in this case difficulties are experienced in printing music, and in finding the market to make musical composition worth while. Music requires for its development the sympathetic co-operation of the people. Composers will meet with more encouragement as time advances and as the population increases. “Australian (1) composers,” said Henry Tate, “have a virgin page before them. Tradition does not cramp them with set formulae; they are free to exploit the technical and tonal resources of the world. Australia has traits which should lead to the evolution of characteristic Australian musical images.”

If the criticism of Australia's literature is noted for its wealth and nationalistic tone, the same can not be said of its musical criticism. In this department poverty and lack of skill

are easily recognised. Those who write criticisms of musical performances lack in most cases a winning style, a fascinating sympathy, a graciousness of expression, a convincing illumination of what has been rendered by a performer. In music the criticism is subjective and nothing else; all relationship with the objective world ceases; all criticism should tend to show that music is the noblest of the arts.

Percy Grainger in an address delivered for the A.B.C., December 1934, maintained that the world's most lovely melodies are found in folk song, or in music (like the Javanese) that lies midway between folk-music and art-music. Australia had little association with folk-song, but developed its musical aptitude and skill from a very humble plant. The plant has grown and there are indications that the growth will soon be so prolific that Australia's musical reputation will be world-wide.

Music can have and ought to have a place among the humane studies which enter a liberal education. Music is taught in many Australian schools, but there are indications that musical tuition or musical appreciation will soon be the cultural possession of all children attending Australian schools. Even in educational classes sponsored by the Adult Education Scheme, musical appreciation will be one of the living subjects, for the greater the number of societies devoted to art and music the more cultured and refined will the world be. Everything beautiful and noble that is seen or heard leaves an impression on the mind, and tends to make one more receptive to the next visitation. What subject surpasses music in making a registration on the mind, or what field of enquiry succeeds so well in the cultivation of aesthetic taste as music?

Music, as Schopenhauer made clear, "is not a representation of the world." "Music," says Wagner, "is the only art which renders one completely unconscious of everything else, but the ecstasy at the root of life; it is the only art which we can absorb with closed eyes like an articulate perfume. (1) When Beethoven is greatest, his music speaks in a voice which suggests no words, but is the outpouring of a heart or soul too full for words."

Wagner in 1857, in his letter on Listz's symphonic poems wrote:—"Hear my creed: music can never and in no possible alliance cease to be the highest, the redeeming art. It is of her nature that which all the other arts hint at, through her and in her becomes the most indubitable of certainties the most direct and definite of truths."

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(1) Scope of Music. (P. C. Buck) *de gustibus non est disputandum.*

Australian music has not come to its full flower as yet, but it is on the way. The plant survived the frosts of its winter; it burst into bloom in its spring; its summer gave it radiance; the mellowness of the autumn has yet to follow. Australia uses its music to influence (1) its collective thought, to mould and refine its people, too rudely sculptured in some cases, and to make them all think of their spiritual destiny.

Australian musicians and leaders endeavour to make their disciples and patrons shareholders in their musical enterprises. co-operators in their musical culture, and recipients of that beautiful benediction of joy, withheld from the wise and the prudent, but lavished without stint on those whose pursuit includes the whole spiritual activity of man. The secret of the sway of music over the human heart has never been accurately told or fully grasped; the spiritual power of its aesthetic is so convincing, because its mystery is so unsearchably deep

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(1) The Spirit of Music. (Ed. Dickinson).

## CHAPTER NINE.

### ADULT EDUCATION.

In my book "The Philosophy of Australian Education", the subject of adult education received ample attention, and the philosophy underlying it was carefully analysed. Although the matter today is receiving more consideration and large sums of money are being spent on its development, still adult education is only yet in the initial stage, and much more has to be accomplished before the adult, whether educated or otherwise, has better provision made for his further educational and aesthetic advancement. Adult education enables an individual to participate in the benefits arising from fuller education, to make him conscious that in life there is always something additional to learn, something advantageous to be familiar with; that it is wisdom to be interested in those subjects which enlarge the spirit, enhance the culture and raise the mental horizon above the ordinary levels.

Adult education requires the right type of men to give it inspiration; it demands an organisation planned and arranged with foresight, a general staff to lay down a plan of campaign, and the social vitality that responds to efforts made by those in authority, or to those engineering it so that all phases of knowledge receive ample patronage—literature, philosophy, social sciences, history, elocution, musical appreciation, etc. Adult classes are not intended primarily to improve the working man's position, or to cater for the vanity of middle class superiority, but to provide studies for all and opportunities for the distribution of the great spiritual stores of knowledge. It is not too late to develop a new interest at fifty, nor too difficult to be introduced into a new world, when the retiring age from business work is in sight. A new interest aroused keeps the mind active; often it is an aid to good health and helps to prolong life.

Adult education aims at making art and music, literature and the drama, history and philosophy, science and nature study, etc., the possession of the ordinary man, giving him the chance to enjoy a life that has meaning, of participating in a leisure more serviceable to himself and to his fellows, and of providing a democracy that is disciplined, well-informed, progressive, cultured—alert to every stimulus and alive to every detail of its environment, with *pax et concordia* as a not im-

possible ideal for its present and future society, and with the possession of an aesthetic in literature, art, and music that any nation might envy.

A society that provides further education for its people not only brings into being an intellectual democracy, but an intellectual aristocracy. If the educator holds the world in his hands, the one educated enjoys the opportunities and privileges withheld from the many. What could be better for individuals to know that on one day in the week a class in musical appreciation is provided for them, or that on other days courses in history, literature, philosophy, the arts, social science, community singing, elocution, ceramics, nature study, forestry, flower culture, etc., are available for those whose interest urges them to study one or more subjects. Such class-work raises the national ideals and the cultural tone of the community; it also benefits the individual scholastically and socially.

When properly understood and more fully developed, adult education enables people to satisfy their intellectual spirit and aesthetic needs, and to arrive at a more satisfactory philosophy of life. Association (1) with people who possess ideas and ideals is a fertile source of assistance in acquiring a satisfactory way of life, and in comprehending the full development of mind and soul—the things that characterise the real man making him more humane, more spiritually active, keener to live on the higher planes of life.

When carried out in a progressive way adult education helps to eliminate religious illiteracy, political and racial intolerance, social complexes, even economical difficulties. Adult education promotes education for action; it promulgates the advantages of general education—an education that is current, real, problem-based, and at the same time fundamental, dealing with the forces and principles of life today and tomorrow.

The (2) Forum plays a large part in the programme of adult education in United States and the success of it depends to a great extent on the reading done by the actors in the subjects arranged for discussion, but the tutorial type of education would seem to be the most effective, especially when the teachers are competent, still *quot homines, tot sententiae*, as Terence wrote.

The *Summum bonum* of adult education would be the granting of scholarships and study-grants to adult educational

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(1) *School and Society*. Mag. N.Y., 1948).

(2) *School and Society*. (U.S.A., 1948).



workers, to enable them to do specific courses and intensive work should the reasons for such an award be justified. Many people when young are deprived of opportunities for professional studies, but when given the privilege in maturer years, outclass those, whose economic advantages in early life were most favourable. Educated adults raise the culture of a country; a cultured community, it is safe to say, possesses a praiseworthy aesthetic. By means of the efforts of the W.E.A., of travelling libraries, public lectures, musical entertainments, political education, art classes, literary societies, etc., much work, formal and informal, has been done in Australia to spread knowledge, to bring about the existence of an enlightened and intelligent citizenship, to raise the cultural tone of the people and to engender and mould public opinion.

### PERSONAL EFFICIENCY.

A decided contributory factor to the culture and aesthetic of a country is the personal (1) efficiency of the individuals who compose its population. By personal efficiency is meant excellence in any department of achievement—it refers to efficiency in acquiring skill, efficiency in observation, in reasoning, in study, in appreciation and taste, in leadership, in speech, in education, in written expression, even skill in training, so as to enable one to acquit himself well. Efficiency also includes in its purview artistic ability in painting, technique and soul in music, fine critical discernment in art and letters, the study of literature as a quickening force—it also includes consummate learning—such learning as only can be known by its like—erudition achieved by slow and careful study but exercising always a force in life and letters, and such scholarship as makes its surroundings a focus of intellectual life.

An efficient individual puts the love of truth above the display of mere ingenuity; he insists on a scholarship that demands quality rather than eloquence; he believes in a personal intellectual acquisition for use as a social service, rather than a something that provides a garnish for life. The efficient man holds to principles rather than to a reign of whims; he requires an education that brings happiness and contentment—a preparation for a "*spiritualis auctoritas*" not as an anodyne for the wounds of life, or a solace for disappointed and unappreciated talent.

Often in life mediocrity dominates the cultural achievements of one, and Australians in the past, have often been accused of fondness for the middling standard and for an accept-

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(1) Personal Efficiency. (P. R. Cole).

ance of the cool approval which so frequently salutes the mediocre. The efficiency envisioned by the writer is of a far higher order—he would exalt excellence in all departments—literary, artistic, musical, scholastic, oratorical and social, but he refers more to the literary and artistic circles, where the possession of efficiency exercises often unconsciously an irresistible influence over the rank and file—the men and women from whose presence radiate a pure enthusiasm for literature, art, music, etc.

The Greek carried too far his logicity into his conception of the beautiful, and his regard for what he considered as excellence; he circumscribed beauty by the ideas of symmetry, proportion and harmony: for him life was directed by stereotyped types and ideals; he never allowed beauty to run wild, nor indulged it with depth and mystery, nor would he allow life to vary the least from the ideals that were usually accepted.

“Leave all and follow me” is the motto of the religious life, it is a motto for the arts as well. Wherever art flourishes there exists to some extent the power of progressing towards higher ideals and loftier attainments, for in words, in music, in rhythmic movements, in sculpture, in painting, architecture, etc., the creative artist seeks to find in the harmony and order of his patterned design a simplification of his experience..

The efficient man shares the give and take of intellectual friendship; he values quality rather than quantity; his aesthetic is a search to find those things that enrich life, to secure man’s spiritual destiny. As a writer, the efficient one has a distinctive style—nervous, illuminative, able—blending (1) history and theory, and showing the impress of events on human thought—his work presents the finished feel; over all of it an air of philosophic calm prevails.

It has been said that at its lower levels style is the garment of thought, but at the higher level its very tissue. In great literature the substance of distinguished thought and the form of distinguished language are present. Fine conceptions are often ruined by a crude expression, but thought expressed well is of value when the thought is valuable.

Personal efficiency knows much of the spiritual life; it is conversant with ideals; it figures in the category of the kenotic school; its interests are not merely passive but productive; it is informed on and appreciative of fields other than literary—the artistic, the musical, the economic, the social etc.

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(1) The Demon of the Absolute. (P. E. More).

In art it is particularly interested—art in the real sense is here implied, for nothing (1) is so strange or so casual as to its conception, more perplexing in its ramifications and more devious in the way of its propaganda, than what is now rated as ultra modern art. The real art requires deep study, its principles must be elucidated, its pursuit is the quest of that inner life which is hidden from those who are only casual observers, and is revealed to those who are enthusiastic lovers and devoted students.

The efficient man reads a certain amount of ephemeral literature as well as the classical masterpieces to keep himself informed in matters of contemporary events; while his literary tastes are cosmopolitan, thus securing a wide mutual appreciation for the intricate web of literary movements of which he forms a part. He reads the newspapers since they, to a degree, reflect the ideals of the people, but after the adoption of the philosophy of Public Education in Australia, all people are able to read, consequently the newspaper is everyone's interest, and everywhere plays a big part in the direction of public opinion.

The man illustrating personal efficiency belongs to the little group of the critics of Life and Letters scattered over the land, who have set their faces against the all invading currents of irresponsible half-thinking and superficiality, now so prominent in our midst. He (2) also regards as illegitimate giving the public what it wants, authors writing to standard specifications, book criticism that concerns immediate interests, the clash of ethics and aesthetics; for ethics and aesthetics are inseparable in art, or more precisely, just in proportion as the practice or criticism of art becomes superficial, ethics and aesthetics tend to fall apart, whereas just in proportion as such practice and criticism strike deeper, they become more and more implicated one in the other, until they lose their distinction in a common root, recognising that all the best art has a profound thought behind it, and that it is impossible to understand the work of a great painter, unless sufficient study is given to his meaning; that in literary criticism time is needed for winnowing, so as to separate the chaff from the grain, the trivial from the precious; that to have standards of comparison it is necessary to drink deeply at the dams of overseas and old world cultures, and that an "imitatio veterum" in all the arts is not without beneficial results.

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(1) Thinking Straight on Modern Art. (H. R. Poore).

(2) On Judging Books. (F. Hackett).

Personal efficiency enables one to see the worth of good prose; that the charm of poetry consists in its leaving its story half untold—all untold to those who cannot tell it to their own hearts; that perfect art never interprets herself, standing dumb to the multitude, but full of eloquence to those who know her; that education aims at the formation of the whole person and prepares the soil of man for fairer flowers and finer fruits in another age; that thoroughness, skill, and efficiency must characterise the work of every individual, for “lightly got, lightly lost”, applies to knowledge, e.g. the radio, as well as to other things in life, and finally, that aesthetic (1) criticism reveals that the artist-life is really a voyage of discovery, an exercise of inward power, an awakening of the faculties of the soul that sleep unknown and unused, to realise the eloquence, the hope and joy of the life that is within.

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(1) Heart of Man, Esthetic Criticism. (G. E. Woodberry).

## CHAPTER TEN.

### MYSTICISM.

Closely associated with the study of aestheticism is a subject known as mysticism—a philosophy (1) which looks beyond the superficial explanation of psychology and harmonises the mystical, intellectual, historical, and institutional aspects of man's spiritual life; it is the expression of the innate tendency of the human spirit towards complete harmony with the transcendental order. Mysticism (2) in ancient days inspired the ancient doctrines of Plotinus and his school; it gave rise to the Scala Perfectionis; it created through the passing centuries a desire like those souls (3) of Vergil—*tendentesque manus ripae ulterioris amore*—to strive to attain to their spiritual destiny in a life of reality above nature.

The term mysticism has a very wide meaning; it is often used more loosely than the word socialism. To many persons a mystic is a dreamer; to others he is one associated with mystical phenomena; to others again, he is the inhabitant of the cloister; but mysticism is a spiritual philosophy demanding the concurrent activity of thought, will and feeling. It has been defined as an extension of the mind to God, by means of the longing of love—it is the "*amor intellectualis dei*" of Spinoza, which draws people upwards, with the aim to make a man a denizen of the spiritual world.

The mystics taught that there is a ground of potential likeness to God in every one—a similarity that some likened to a seed that could be tended; others to a spark that required to be fanned to a flame. There are mystics in the cloister, in the seminaries, in the cultured homes, in the schools of learning, in the students' sanctuaries. We find mystics among the poets, in the ranks of the artists, in those who catch now and then rich glimpses of the bowers of Paradise, those who aspire after the highest seats of the muses, or those whose aim is to live a life as near to perfection as is humanly possible.

Mysticism is founded on man's conscious need of communion with God, as painting and sculpture are founded on

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(1) Man and the Supernatural. (Evelyn Underhill).

(2) Mysticism. (Evelyn Underhill).

(3) Vergil, Book VI.

man's craving for beauty. There (1) is a longing in the human heart for God, says C. M. Addison, universal and inextinguishable, a longing so deep and intense that it was termed by one who knew the aridity of the Syrian desert, the "thirst" of the soul for the living God. Man is incomplete, and knows it, and will be satisfied with nothing less than God. The mystics are those who feel the want most keenly, and have tried to satisfy it, and the secret of mysticism lies here: it claims to have discovered the meeting place, where God and man see face to face, where the union so long sought for in so many directions is alone found to be real and satisfying.

The most persistent feature of the mystic is the incorporation of God. Mystics are not purely intellectual, but people actuated by love, love for God, love for beauty, for personal perfection and for a wish (1) to be united to God. The Scala Perfectionis, or the means by which the individual reached his goal presented three grades of achievement (a) the purgative stage; (b) the illuminative way; (c) the unitive state. The purgative stage purified the senses and built up the character; the illuminative enabled the mystic to enjoy the cup of intellectual vision, to observe Beauty face to face, to feel the presence of God; the unitive, the highest grade was the utter transmutation of the self in God, a free and conscious participation of an individual in the life of Eternity.

Mysticism with its tradition of quietude, its detachment from the world, its eagerness for "God only", has the power and commission to train and discipline; it is purely a spiritual activity. Mysticism is a holiness which, in the words of Lord Morley is not the same as duty, still less is it the same as religious belief. It is a name for an inner grace of nature, an instinct of the soul—which dwells in living patient and confident communion with the Unseen God."

Love is the animating principle in mysticism. "Through (1) love the soul goes beyond all workings of the intellect and all images of the mind and is carried above itself; utterly leaving itself, it flows into God: then is God peace and fulness. the soul loses itself in the infinite solitude and darkness of the Godhead; but so to lose itself is rather to find itself. The soul is, as it were, all God-coloured, because its essence is bathed in the essence of God." Like lovers in life, the whole nature of mysticism lives from hour to hour by memory and

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(1) The Theory and Practice of Mysticism. (C. M. Addison).

(1) Vide St. Teresa's poems translated from the Spanish by E. A. Peers.

(1) Western Mysticism. (Cuthbert Butler).

contemplation, for the mystic longs for unity and contemplates its joy, just as the bride pictures the physical perfections of the bridegroom.

The ideal (1) of mysticism is exactly the opposite to the ideal of reason. Instead of perfect human nature, it seeks to abolish it; instead of building a better world, it undermines the foundations of the world already built; it rejects human goods and emphasises the contemplative life; it shuns noise, strikes, troubles and yearns for peace and quietude. The soul (2) appears to have two eyes, and union with God, as far as possible, is its objective. Mystical knowledge is beyond empirical proof; its acquisition is only possible to one who practises the inner life.

The men and women who have experienced in rare moments a more exalted state of living than is known in common everyday life, are really the mystics, and according to Dean Inge (3) their actions are reasonable, and their methods lawful. He writes "That the human mind while still (in the body pent) may obtain glimpses of the eternal order, and enjoy foretastes of the bliss of heaven, and this is a belief which I, at least, see no reason to reject. It involves no rash presumption, and is not contrary to what may be readily believed about the state of immortal spirits passing through a mortal life. Sir Francis Younghusband in his book "Modern Mystics", secured first hand evidence of the mystical workings of individuals in India and in Europe, and the evidence obtained not only increased his interest in mysticism but its phenomena when examined astonished him.

When true mystical experience occurs a series of psychological and sometimes physical events are set going—there may be exhibitions in the lives of the people concerned of phenomena or of abnormal or pathological effects. The mystical experience never leaves the human subject at the level at which it finds him. It appears (4) as a transforming agent, which compels the experiment to conform to new standards and to try hard things. The ordinary sequence of natural life may continue, but it is seen afterwards in a supernatural regard. The soul suddenly perceives within its natural life further unguessed at

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(1) Mysticism in Christianity. (W. K. Fleming).

(2) Ibid.

(3) Light, Life and Love: Selection from the German Mystics of the Middle Ages, Page 37.

(4) Man and the Supernatural. (E. Underhill).

possibilities, fresh heights and depths of existence, fresh opportunities for work and love.

The peculiarity of the Inner Life is that it cannot be made intelligible to those who have not experienced some of it. It is impossible to impart to others what is not one's own possession; it is difficult to introduce another to religious and intellectual procedures, when the introducer concerned has not already made acquaintance with them. The practical man cannot direct the mystic, he understands not his ways; the physical man comprehends not the need for intellectual analysis nor the channels of supernatural experiences; the materialist never grasps how the idea of immortality reflects social culture; nor can the educator guide wisely nor stimulate fruitfully his students if he himself has not served an appropriate apprenticeship. In a letter dated 1871 Ruskin wrote: "Teachers with character and genuine ability are necessary to give distinctive influence to education, for no man who is wretched in his own heart and feeble in his own work can rightly help others."

In a mystic experience, or a poetic experience, or a poetic ecstasy, as Wordsworth terms it—"the light of sense goes out, but with a flash the invisible world is revealed"; it is an experience according to (2) Bremond, "that means we know no more than we did but an impression of understanding a little something (c.f. Ode on Immortality) that before we hardly knew, of tasting a fruit at the rind of what we have scarcely nibbled."

Pierre Quint holds that: "Each artist seems to be the citizen of an unknown country which he has forgotten . . . the more the artist approaches that country, the more his apprehension is vivid and direct; the greater the beauty his art reaches, the nobler will his aesthetic be. Good lovers live rather in the object of their love than in themselves." That there is something intangible, a mystery in poetry, has almost always been recognised. The poet's mystery is also the mystery of each individual; what he sees of his own deep soul gives him access to the deeper soul of the poet; the more one sees of his soul, the clearer grows his own.

The transcendent enters human life, with prayer as an activity and sanctity as an experience. The two great facts of prayer and sanctity pointing beyond the natural order and requiring for their explanation and the level of reality, are the standing witnesses of the supernatural within the human life. Prayer (1) is directed to the supra-sensible and is a

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(1) Man and the Supernatural. (Evelyn Underhill).

(2) Prayer and Poetry. (H. Bremond).



constant character of developed manhood wherever found. It represents the closest association of which any soul is at any time capable with the living and everywhere present God, who is the true initiator of all that we really do.

Admittedly, mysticism too, has its dangers; the mystical temper has led again and again to hard or dreamy apathy towards human suffering. In the mystic's quest of spiritual privilege he often-times tends to aloofness from the common lot. The great desire too, for personal purification for the training of the inner life for the mystical communion, occasionally transfers one from the world of reality to a world of a vision, from a life of sense and balance to one of fanaticism and social misfit.

If mysticism is not so conspicuous on the surface today, it is not because man's need for it is less than before, but because much of its historical work is being performed by other means. The religious impulse which in mysticism appears undivided, has become distributed among a number of channels, but the mystics are always associated with a spiritual order; they insist that they know for certain the presence and activity of that which they call the Love of God. They are conscious of a present God, and they participate in this world in the real and Eternal life to come; their way is a progress, a growth in love, a deliberate fostering of the inward tendency of the soul towards God.

Mystics have appeared in the world from time immemorial. They are not confined to any particular place or to any specific nation. The Hindus and Moslems have their mystics, the Jews and the Christians have theirs too. Arab mysticism once flourished in Spain. Some of the European mystics were celibates, some were married; some are classified as psychological mystics, others as theological, others again as religious ones. Plotinus (1) is regarded as the mystic, par excellence; St. Augustine, the prince of mystics; St. Thomas Aquinas the angelic doctor; while St. Catherine of Sienna, St. Bernard, St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa, and above all John Ruysbroeck (died 1381) are regarded as the major representatives in the mystical circle.

Bunyan and Fox, Dean Inge the theologian, Margery Kempe, the psychologist, Blaise Pascal, the philosopher, also rank high as important personages in the mystical world, but the English mystics—Dame Julien, Richard Rolle, Walter Hilton, Evelyn Underhill and Arthur Symonds figure among the lesser lights.

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(1) Western Mysticism (C Butler).

Mystics, however, are not confined to any age or to any time. Therese of Lisieux, (France), Isabel Daurelle, died 1914, are two recent examples of world-renowned mystics. Strangely enough the line of great seers of visions and hearers of revelations, is composed of women to a great extent. Dean Inge is looked upon as a modern contributor to mystical literature, while Evelyn Underhill is perhaps one of the best equipped of English writers on the subject.

In addition to the names mentioned above, there are others like the poet William Blake, who was perhaps the truest representative in English literature of the one who displays the mystic touch. For Blake (2) the external world was nothing; he turned away from it, but a new one was created for him. Horizons invisible to ordinary mortal eyes stretched out before him and he saw himself surrounded by a transfigured world, with immense vistas bathed in light, in dazzling colours, in mysterious perfumes. Deaf to the sounds of the world he trained his inward perceptions to listen to harmonies which cannot be heard with the outward ear. The leaves of the trees spoke to him in a tongue he understood and responded to; he read the thoughts of the field-flowers, their desires, their lamentations; new human and angelic beings rose from the Eden of his own creation; in his strange world the spirits spoke and becoming his friends told him their secrets; he lived their life, shared their passions, rejoiced in their triumphs, exulted in their strength and sympathised in their sorrow—his people were no longer the people of the ordinary world, nor the ordinary world his world.

Blake (3) was the dreamer, the visionary, a man unaware of life's reality; his songs were echoes of his mysterious world—he was a mystic. In most poets there is to be found an element of mysticism; they may be lifted above the earth, but they do not lose sight of it. Some, like Blake, belonged to the invisible world, and they addressed its inhabitants in their poems. Of all the modern poets, Blake is the most intensely mystical. His mysticism is such that our language is quite incapable of describing his visions or of expressing them satisfactorily; mysticism is its inspiration: symbolism is its expression. Mysticism fashioned all Blake's thoughts and conceptions till it became an integral part of his life.

Besides religious mysticism and the mysticism associated with the literature of a country, there exists also a mystical

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(2) William Blake. (P. Berger).

(3) Ibid.

theory of aesthetics pertaining to art, and such a theory reaches its full development in German idealism. With the writers of that school all beauty is recognised as the sensuous expression of the "Idea", as philosophy is its intellectual expression, and some treatment of aesthetics becomes a necessary third to treatises on metaphysics and ethics by all philosophers of that school.

The mystery and effects of music are also able to raise one into the world of mysticism, for music has its secrets as well as poetry; it possesses mysteries the same as religion does. The greatness of anything is frequently due to the air of mystery that surrounds it, to the secrets it holds—secrets that urge man on to find their solution.

### MYSTICISM IN AUSTRALIAN WRITERS.

In poems of elaborate height of subtlety and symbol, in fact in all great poetry, there are found traces of mysticism. Great poetry springs from what Maritain calls a "natural mystical experience" that expresses itself not in logic, but in signs and symbols. This trance state that Maritain suggests, may be observed here and there in the poems of Wordsworth. Blake, as has been noted, is the great English mystic poet, but the mystical spirit in English Literature finds ample recognition in the poets Keats, Browning, Tennyson, Kingsley, T. E. Brown, M. Arnold and Clough.

All of those poets had touches of that psychic intuition or vision, which proclaimed the mystic, while Coleridge, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Francis Thompson, Coventry Patmore, were even mystics of a high order. Wordsworth's poetry, e.g. lines composed above Tintern Abbey", says Dr. Inge, "is the best example in literature of a revelation through impersonal external nature. Nature to his intention was the storehouse of laws whence we deduce the very truths of God's existence. Patmore saw in the mysteries of earthly love a living type and symbol of the Divine Union with the soul. He interpreted love as "the mystic craving of the great to become the love captive of the small, while the small has a corresponding thirst for the enthrallment of the great."

Mysticism has not been absent from the Australian writers—some have specialised in the mysteries of the unseen; some have written of the transcendental; some have referred to psycho-physical phenomena; many have described the rapturous joy, the ecstatic delight of the close union of the soul with God. In the case of one writer, his mystical literature glows with an intimate and impassioned love of the absolute.

Of the many who are witnesses to the love of Ideal Beauty, which is closely bound up with the mystical temperament and to the metaphysical and personal aspects of mystical truths, Christopher Brennan, Victor Daley, A Stevens (Vic.), R. D. Fitzgerald, L. Lavater, H. Kendall, Bernard O'Dowd, H. R. McCrae, K. Slessor, J. B. O'Hara, James Devaney and others are the most conspicuous, but Christopher Brennan, R. D. Fitzgerald and J. S. Neilson are particularly articulate in mystical phrases, and in the philosophy of the transcendental.

"The Lost Fairies", by Marie E. J. Pitt; "The Poet", by Bernard O'Dowd; Brennan's "Wanderer"; "Essay on Memory", by R. D. Fitzgerald; "Five Bells", by K. Slessor; "Cenotaph", by Brian Fitzpatrick, etc., are all poems dealing with the mystical—some in a small way, others more conspicuously. "The Birds Go By", "The Orange Tree", "Love's Coming"—three poems by J. S. Neilson, are rich in mystical ideas and phrases. All the poets mentioned above are familiar with the mystic way, whether it is by intuition, infusion, or by training, is not easy to decide. In "The Birds Go By" Shaw Neilson preaches the doctrine of Immortality.

"Westward at even . . . yet never never to die". The birds live on, the individual bird may die.

"No, not for dying like all the sweet flowers are they  
—Flowers giving hope to mankind on their little stay"—  
The poet believes, as he sees the birds go by at evening time, that they live for ever.

In "The Orange Tree", not only is Neilson beautiful, lyrical and inspiring, but mystical.

"The young girl stood beside me. I  
Saw not what her young eyes could see:  
—A light, she said, not of the sky  
Lives somewhere in the orange tree."

The poet in these lines is surely thinking of a state different from the material world.

Victor Daley (1) is a mystic in "Keepsakes" e.g.

I have some friends—none better man could own—

And I must leave them and go forth alone!

and in "The Other Side"

Is it but all a dream  
That when this life is done,  
Across the Stygian Stream  
There shines a fairer sun?

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(1) Wine and Roses. (Victor J. Daley).

"To My Soul"—

Be still and wait, O caged Immortal Bird!  
Thou shall be free;  
Not all in vain has thou the voices heard  
Of lives to be.

Even A. B. Paterson is mystical in some of his poems, e.g. "Over the Range". The poet makes the little bush maiden give her description of the country he alludes to "Over the Range", she says:—

"They never need work, nor want, nor weep;  
No troubles can come their heart to estrange.  
Some Summer night I shall fall asleep,  
And wake in the country over the range."

Barcroft Boake in his poem—"Where the Dead Men Lie", and Capel Boake in "The Little Track", indicate the mystical touch, but the best illustration of all is noted in the poem: "The Beauty Seekers", by Emily Bulcock.

"Know ye the Beauty seekers? They are but a sweet small band,  
But theirs is a power, God-given, to leaven a life-less land,  
These are the future's guardians, who bid the world aspire,  
They walk on sordid pathways, but their feet are shod with fire!  
These are the Spirit's children, pure souls sent down to earth  
They still in dreams remember the Heaven that gave them birth!"

George Essex Evans, in "The Secret Key"—is surely mystical:

"I sing eternal hope and strong endeavour  
Truth shining down a myriad aisles of thought,  
I sing the deathless souls of men, for ever  
By strange, wild paths to one vast triumph brought;  
The God in man—the hunger of the soul—  
One with the Wisdom that inspires the whole."

It is not necessary to refer to or to analyse all the poems by the writers mentioned; it suffices to say that the mystic poet with a clearness of vision, so characteristic of mystics, and with the faculty of discrimination between the essential and the unessential, recognises that the good in this world is of far greater significance than the obvious evil. The mystic holds that the world is ordered for good, and that a drive towards perfection runs through the world process, and that Beauty leads the poet on the mystic way, as he climbs slowly upward to some attainment yet unseen, and enters on a new life where new powers are conferred and new responsibilities are admitted.

Anyone (1) who has practised landscape painting knows the immense and unguessed transfiguration of the natural world which comes to the artist through patient, attentive and unselfish regard: how the significance of simple objects change, how beauty and reality to which the common eye is blind is discovered in familiar things. The disciplined attentiveness which helps one to enter into communion with nature, is the great way of entering into communion with Supernature. It enables one also to read in the lines of the poet the mystery, beauty and interpretation, that would otherwise be absent, and it also helps one to understand the genuine artists of eternal life. Anyone familiar with mysticism readily recognises its workings in a poet, writer, or one who aims at eternalising the temporal, or who manifests a capacity for a reality beyond the bounds of sense.

The mystic often finds his whole being saturated with the joy he has felt. There is such a thing as perfect joy. Masters of the spiritual life, like Thomas a Kempis, give expression to beautiful thoughts that bring peace, the basis of all true happiness. Happiness (2), however, is not a mere passive state, nor is it a mere outward and passing activity, but an activity within the soul itself in the discharge of functions of the intellect and will. The essence of happiness lies in the highest and purest activity of the intellect—man's noblest faculty.

The fruition of joy, according to Ruysbroeck, constitutes the interior life of mystic souls immersed in the absolute. The perusal of Australian poetry reveals in many cases the spirit of joy, happiness and ecstasy. It would seem that Australian poets and artists have been carried away by their enthusiasm for their country, or by their love for their fellow-men, or by their zeal for social reforms, and their interest in the common things of life, that their souls have been so filled with zeal as to make them happy. In their happiness they have revealed their own secrets, they have educated their readers; they have diffused a spirit of good-will to all mankind and they have encouraged people to cultivate an esprit de corps that will be of service to the community and to the nations at large.

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(1) *Man and the Supernatural*. (Evelyn Underhill).

(2) *Moral Philosophy*. (Rickaby).

SECTION TWO.  
CHAPTER ELEVEN.

**CRITICISM OF AUSTRALIAN LITERARY AESTHETICISM.  
INTRODUCTION.**

**CRITICISM IN GENERAL.**

Professor L. Abercrombie in his book (1) tells us that "The realm of literature is occupied by the activities of three distinct powers: the power to create, the power to enjoy, and the power to criticise. The power to criticise can be acquired, but there are no principles describing the method needed to create literature or the formulae prescribed how best to enjoy it. Criticism as a noticeable activity in literature begins when vague instinctive preference passes into conscious defined choice which can be rationally defined." Criticism is something above mere impression, or sensorial prejudice, or emotional accident. John G. Robertson (2) says that it is a way of teaching and the science is to be found in the consistency of literary estimates.

Once a standard of reference is set up, judicial criticism enters. Criticism, like the art which it criticises, is a social product, and consequently concerns society as a whole and not the individual. Criticism of the past has been largely the history of attempts to formulate rules for its guidance—such rules have often proved untrustworthy, sometimes contradictory and frequently inapplicable.

Criticism is essentially an exercise of judgment, the evaluation of things by their comparison with known standards of excellence. "The critic", says Middleton Murry, "stands or falls by the stability of his truth, and necessarily by his skill in communicating it. If the thing to be judged conform to the criteria, it is worthy of praise, and the measure of praise should correspond to the degree of conformity. If it does not conform to the criteria it is blameworthy."

Good criticism has two functions—the one constructive, the other destructive; both are essential and both in practice are equally important. Constructive criticism establishes and

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(1) Principles of Literary Criticism.

(2) Essays and Addresses on Literature.

fixes the precise status of what is good, while destructive criticism literally destroys what is mediocre.

In the history of criticism few things are more perplexing than the varieties of taste, whereby the idols of past generations crumble suddenly to dust, while the despised and rejected are lifted to pinnacles of glory. Successive waves of aesthetic preference often follow one another with curious rapidity and sweep away the past established fortresses of fame from their venerable monuments. In some cases, criticism unearths some wonder of the past—the poet or writer who was ahead of his time, or who perhaps was misunderstood, or was not appreciated by his contemporaries.

It belongs to criticism to set forth the perspect of literary study—a method that suggests the form of a map. To substitute the map for the journey, would be madness, but to set out on the journey without the guidance of a map or chart would be no less ludicrous. Two elements constitute literary criticism: the philosophic and the historical. One is the attempt to arrive at a theory of literature; the other is the succession of critical writings. Philosophical criticism is of fundamental importance; critical writings are important so far as they assist the philosophy of literature. "In (1) the present state criticism appears in the form of critical history; interest in the philosophy of literature has almost disappeared. That part of literary criticism which leads up to fundamental points in the philosophy of literature makes the essential ground work of the whole study."

According to John Morley "Literature is the noblest result and the finest gratification of man's curiosity about his own nature and his own lot—so conceived it widens the range of human ideas and enriches one's spiritual existence: it becomes the master organon for giving men the two precious qualities of breadth of interest and balance of judgment, multiplicity of sympathies and steadiness of sight."

If literature be what John Morley says, the function of criticism, according to the same authority ought to be the creation of a current of true and fresh ideas and the establishment of an intellectual atmosphere for igniting creative minds, and for awakening appreciation, the guardian of the gate of beauty.

Literature depends on some deep law of supply and demand, and the apprehension of that law is one of the main problems of literary criticism; its programme deals with literary values

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(1) *The Modern Study of Literature.* (R. G. Moulton).



and literary welfare, and to observe to what degree writers are responsible for literary development, and for the creation of literary taste. A great writer shows that the disinterested life is possible; that his search after his own perfection secures results; that his particular work is needed and commands support; that he has a message to convey to his fellow-men; and that he is a contributor to the thought of his time, and to the cultural heritage of his people. It is difficult to criticise the work of a writer still living; after his death his contribution can be more accurately gauged, more critically assessed, more fairly analysed.

A premature self-consciousness paralyses a nation as well as its literature, but when a nation begins to develop, its literature develops too. The stage of adolescence passes, maturity with its traits and responsibilities follows. Maturity visualises proddings, moulding, vision, earnestness, spiritual adventure, an aristocracy of the spirit, which according to Middleton Murry, "is the only aristocracy in the world worth having, for any man may enter it." "A great literature," says Van Wyck Brooke (1), "is a reservoir of spiritual energy: and every writer who can be kept from going astray, who can be helped to the possession of everything he has in him, is like a stream turned into the reservoir, and replenishing it every day."

The greatest literature is the heroic—the expression of heroic experience. The great man is necessary to produce the great writer; it is the great writer who produces the great book. The great writer's literary art will always be in some degree suggestion, and the height of his literary art is to make the power of suggestion in language as commanding, as far-reaching, as vivid, as subtle as possible, as he deals with all things which impinge upon one's waking existence. The matter of literature is pure experience—it communicates experience, making the experience which lived in the author's mind, live again in the reader's mind. The experience translated must be whole and entire, and the language must be expressive.

Criticism, according to Professor Tucker, must discriminate in literary form and thought between "the (1) yellow which is gold and the yellow which glitters, between the brilliant which is diamond and the brilliant which is paste. By literature is meant creative literature, the literature of feeling, imagination and invention, not mere books, not what Lamb calls *biblia abiblia* "things in books clothing". Literature for

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(1) *Sketches in Criticism* by Van Wyck Brooke. J. M. Dent, Lond. 1934.

(1) *The Cult of Literature in Australia*. (T. G. Tucker). 1902.

its value depends on its intrinsic strength and worth, upon the height, depth, and rareness of the thought or imagination, the excellence of the style, not upon any sort of deliberate localisation—should its smack of the soil be pervaded with local colour; the style is the man: the man is largely the reflex of his surroundings." He also maintains that "rich (1) thought requires to be embodied in exquisite and melodious expression. A story must be full of life and verve, full of pathos, or full of humour. Well constructed developed local colour is the accident, it is not the *raison d'être* of a novel. What really matters is to have a narrative to tell—local scenery and local idioms come in by themselves. The element which touches and interests all men at all times—the supreme quality in literature, is like the light of the sun and moon and stars; it is something 'which is shed upon and understood in all lands alike.'"

Criticism, too, can be considered as the endeavour to discriminate experiences and to evaluate them. It helps to discover ourselves, to define aims, to educate faculties, to seize upon the proper line of growth, to resist impulse, to read some books in preference to others, to follow one master rather than another, to appreciate one writer when our natural attitude should be to choose a different one, to draw from individuals still higher standards, or to replenish within them what is beginning to become stale. Literary criticism is the art of judging or appraising beauty in literature. Beauty in literature is the symbolic quality, which words have of reproducing the the pleasure aroused by the thing. The highest form of beauty is the sublime—it is of two kinds—natural beauty is one, and the other made by man is called art. All criticism must be fair and just; personal reactions and feelings—conditions never wholly disassociated from its exercise—should never be allowed to interfere with its proper functioning. "A critic (2) should be conscious of himself as an artist, he should be aware of the responsibility imposed on him by his art, he should respect the technique of his craft . . ."

Aristotle was perhaps the first authority in the literature of criticism, and from his time onwards the chief critical figures have been among the greatest intellects of their age. As long as literature is literature, there will be always a place for criticism of it. The terms classicism and romanticism frequently appear in the history of literary criticism. Every one who writes about them believes that he knows what the words mean; actu-

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(1) *The Cult of Literature in Australia.* (T. G. Tucker). 1902.

(2) Middleton Murry.

ally, they mean something a little different for each observer, and merely mean to mean the same things.

The history of criticism owes much to Horace who made the spirit of Aristotle's theory the ideal of European criticism. He made men feel that the demand for unity in a work of art is identical with good taste, and that aesthetic theory serves a useful purpose. Horace's "*ars poetica*" is, in form a body of precepts addressed to those whose wish is to compose poetry. Longinus (1), the first comparative critic of literature, emphasised the value of style. For him style was the revelation of the very spirit of a work and of the personality of its author. The saying—"style is the man" takes its origin from Longinus. The Greek Treatise of an early century attributed to Longinus first saw the light in the time of the Renaissance, dating from 1554, when it was first printed; consequently, its importance in the history of criticism is extremely modern.

Dante devised a totally new species of poetic art coming under no possible category in the accepted classification with which he was perfectly familiar. His book "*Divine Comedy*", is unique in form: it set the traditional classification at defiance, and he raised the fundamental aesthetic problem whether art-species are permanent. The subject-matter of Dante's work is nominally of the other world.

Among the critics in the history of criticism—are the English, the French, the Germans, and some belonging to other countries, but in recent years America, Canada and Australia figure among those countries whose writers offer valuable additions to the story and development of literary criticism.

Johnson supported by magnificent practical and vigorous precept the ideal of poetry as creative power controlled by conscious deliberate and learned art. Pope attempted a complete exposition of stylistic criticism. Dryden in England made a valuable contribution to literary criticism, but Boileau in France aimed at making a sharp distinction between what was praiseworthy in literature and what should be eliminated. The German, Lessing, laid the foundation of modern criticism as a literary force, and on this foundation all critics have since worked. Lessing stressed that literature is the expression of national and racial genius.

Saint Beuve was the first literary critic who brought to criticism the most complex variety of literary gifts. He excelled in many kinds of writing, but turned all his gifts to

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(1) "*De Sublimitate*." On the Sublime Greek Treatise translated by Rhys Roberts (C.U. Press).

criticism. His influence is still active in criticism, in poetry, in biography and in the autobiographical novel. Madame De Stael (1)—the daughter of Necker, the finance minister of Louis XIV, contended that nothing in life should be stationary "when art does not change it becomes petrified." Mme de Stael was really a social critic for she insisted that literature is an expression of society.

Coleridge contributed a valuable quota to the history of criticism. He did not stress the historical point of view, but by the catholicity of his literary lore, and his ability for sudden and illuminating comparisons drawn from poetry of different ages and of different languages, anticipated some of the most useful accomplishments of the historical method. He gave literature prestige, not as an ornament, but as a function of life. He maintained, too, that the pleasure given by art is always immediate.

Matthew Arnold (2) as a literary critic was of immense help to his age, and to the people of all lands. He upheld the spirit of culture against the utilitarian spirit of his time. He carried in his mind a sense of what people of refined taste have admired in prose and poetry through the ages, and that feature made him a good guide for those who followed him.

Emerson represented literature as the talisman for changing life, but for Quiller-Couch (3) literature "was an art and therefore not to be pondered on only, but practised, to be kept alive, supple, active and vigorous in all honourable uses."

"An age that has no criticism," said Oscar Wilde, "is either an age in which art is immobile, hieratic, and confined to the reproduction of formal forms, or one that possesses no art at all . . . it is the critical faculty that invents fresh forms . . . it is to the critical instinct that we owe each new mould that art finds ready to its hand . . . There has never been a creative age, that has not been critical."

Ruskin developed a theory which propounded the theory that no supreme art could be created except by religious men. For Shelley, poetry had a moral effect without recommending any specific morality. The literary discoveries of the great critics, in fact, represented not so much a systematic philosophy of literature as a ferment of ideas. All the contentions of the authorities quoted are true, but they represent only a part of the truth—all these ideas have played a great part and a transforming role in literature down to the present day.

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(1) *De La Litterature*. (Mme. de Stael).

(2) *Culture and Anarchy*. (M. Arnold).

(3) *Inaugural Lecture on the Art of Writing*. (Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch).

To do justice to all critics of English literature, volumes would be necessary. Reference in these pages has only been made to those who appeared to be helpful to the development of this thesis.

There would seem to be a law underlying fluctuations of literary judgments, and that law would seem to represent the continuous triumph of creative literature over the criticism that has opposed it. Criticism like everything else is in a state of flux; it moves with the times; it borrows some of its hues from the changing world of thought, and the more audacious shades tend to be looked upon as orthodox processes. However, criticism of literature has by no means been absorbed into something else as alchemy into chemistry; the core of the matter still remains, though the ramifications are endless. today the (1) psychological spirit, the sociological element, the psycho-analytical, the scientific, the correct interpretation of words, the science of the human past, and a sound knowledge of the facts of development are the foundation of all critical endeavours.

In its higher form criticism is as much creative literature as a fine novel, or a play, or a poem; it is not the form or character which is the decisive factor in determining whether any kind of writing is creative or not—it is the quality of the mind behind it. Creative writing is simply writing produced by a creative mind regardless of the form or genre, the writer uses for his expression. Some men are dramatists, others poets; some figure as literary critics, and as some of the greatest poets have been literary critics, there is good ground for believing that there is a close relation between poetry and criticism. Wordsworth's preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* influenced generations of poets. Of all form of creative writing, creative criticism is the rarest—the rewards are few; it regards criticism as an intellectual force representing a principle through which the world of ideas renews itself; it prunes and trims old ideas to satisfy new desires, or aspirations, and to keep in harmony with changing variations in life and thought.

Sometimes a review is confused with criticism, but there is a wide difference between them. A book just published can be reviewed, but a criticism to be satisfactory requires time, thought, careful analysis and erudition on the part of the critic. If it is a work of art, it can hardly be criticised in the

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(1) *Criticism in the Making.* (L. Cazamian).

week of its birth. Evidence has to be weighed, for the theory of criticism requires balance.

When literature keeps the interest from fading; when intensity of imagination makes a poet's work real; when criticisms are illuminative and striking then literature lives, e.g. The beauty of Helen has lived through the ages; Shakespeare has immortalised Hamlet; Banjo Paterson, the Australian balladist, produced poems that everyone reads and memorises. Some works attract sympathy, others have the power of appeal. The nameless charm or wistfulness of a thing not perfectly articulated which means more than it can ever say, possesses more than it can ever impart, envisages more than it can ever define, appears to hold one with an irresistible power. The beauty of a ruin suggests the wonderful building that once existed; the room of an over-thrown castle conveys an idea of what the rest of the construction 'was like; the picture of a scene indicates to some extent the grandeur of the surrounding country. In the same way in literature words can be made to take life from one another; a great artist in words plays with them as a musician plays upon a flute; a short literary theme gives rise to thoughts that are full of meaning and convey more than they express.

Good criticism widens the mental range of readers, awakening an interest in a writer that otherwise might not be read, or serving to recall to the reading circle a book that a past generation under-rated, or failed to appreciate at his just level.

Mr. Saintsbury believed that criticism is the most delightful of occupations, due probably to his devotion to the five special laws underlying all good criticism:—

- (a) Unity of design,
- (b) Natural art,
- (c) The greatest effect with the least effort,
- (d) Clarity,
- (e) Reticeence.

With most critics, however, there is a lack of that searching and constructive criticism that makes life hard, and drives men to give of their best. Discriminating critics are not lacking, but their views have relatively small publicity, influence or sway. Universal education in many holds up a mirror to the people's life and organization.

Finally criticism is neither praise nor blame, neither attack nor judgment, but a rich and varied activity appealing to all powers of our intellectual nature. To manage it suc-

cessfully an all round comprehension of literature that comes from the practice of writing in many forms is essential. We are told that the greater the inspiration, the greater the art required to give it literary expression; also the richer the substance, the finer the texture required to clothe it. We can also add that the better the literary production, the higher the skill required to criticise it adequately, to grasp its significance as an artistic whole, to appreciate it as a work of art. If art is the basis of literature then literary study merges into the general science of aesthetics—a science inextricably interwoven with the master science of psychology.

### THE CRITIC.

After discussing what criticism in general is, attention might be directed to the critic and the part he plays in the literary domain. The critic i.e. the one who criticises a work understands and interprets as fully as possible the energy employed in the composition of the work and the reason for producing it; he endeavours to live again the stages of the development of the work, and grasps the impulses and intentions of the writer.

There is no necessity to be a working artist, a practitioner of some craft or other, before daring to offer a critical opinion. A carpenter who makes a bad table, a cook who spoils a breakfast, a speaker who does not do justice to the celebration of a function, may surely be found fault with by a man, who is neither a carpenter, nor a cook nor a public speaker. Art is not the critics trade; the artist uses the intuitive or quasi-intuitive powers of the mind; the critic makes use of the analytic, and his position with regard to art is that of the moral theologian with regard to the virtue of prudence. The critic is the guardian of the standards of artistic excellence; he does not form them, he discovers and evaluates them. The function of the critic is distinct from that of the artist; his position is a legitimate and social one, with his own rights and duties towards the artist and towards society.

Some say that critics are born, but if that assertion is admitted, it remains true that they are improved with training and practice. As they have to be familiar with writings of all kinds, they are best developed when during their formative periods, they are surrounded by writers saturated in literature, rocked and dandled to its sounds and syllables from their earliest years, as composers have to be rocked and dandled to

the sound of music. To train the critic, says Drennan (1), "feed the mind on excellence, whether it be on good for the will, truth for the intellect or beauty for the soul." The critic must be trained in taste and judgment, but the ultimate education to good taste is a difficult problem.

The critic speaks with the voice of authority—he is the wise guide to the garden of Parnassus, just as another man is the guide to scenic beauties or the wonders of nature, like the Jenolan Caves. Churton Collins remarked "If the poet is the interpreter of God to mankind, the critic is the interpreter of the poet to the individual man." Good critics are primarily the connoisseurs of the beautiful, since they prepare the way for the literary man, stimulating his efforts, helping him to collect facts and search for general laws. A good critic possesses the spirit of tolerance and generosity, looking to what is said rather than to the one who says it; he follows closely the golden advice of A'Kempis (2), "Inquire not who may have said a thing but consider what is said . . ." The critic acknowledges greatness in a poet if his poetry is able to transport the mind of the reader, if his lines convey the images that give power to the writing and enthralment and emotion to what is said.

The critic readily recognises a luminary (3) for all time, as well as one who fails to add new and lovely lights to the literary firmament. When scholars are by no means clear in their minds as to the objects and aims of their writings and poems, and while in the gestation of their subject and its gradual expression, they discover something that was in their mind from the outset, and as they proceed they see their subject in a new light, and add to it all that is possible to say about it, yet to the critic the gradual stages appear in correct sequence; he sees how the writer has proceeded; he notices what he has missed; and he understands how a better case by the writer could have been made of his subject; he observes where a break with the past exists, where there is a general loosening of form, an indifference to phrase. He has an attentive eye to observe the various patterns in literature; he recognises when a re-shape has occurred, when a "school" gives direction and assistance. The critic discovers the master-minds who exercise an influence over the rank and file; those who continually upset the idea of equality in the republic of

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(1) *The Spirit of Modern Criticism.* (M. Drennan.)

(2) *Book I, Chapter 5.* (A'Kempis).

(3) *Judgment and Appreciation of Literature.* (T. G. Tucker).



letters, those who demonstrate clearly the existence of a literary aristocracy—the men who fertilise the creative life, “who are to genius, what honesty is to honour,” who demonstrate to all generations that the life of the spirit is impersonal.

A critic, too, has an eye for perfection as well as keenness to observe a flaw. To demonstrate the beauty or truth in a work is more important than showing how it can be written, but a critic's speciality is observed at its best when he indicates when a writer lacks spiritual profundity or imaginative power, when he falls short of the highest achievement, where he ceases to be illuminating, where he is cumbersome, laborious, factually too heavy, or politically too involved, or where he is a singular spirit that comes on the scene to quicken the germs of strange thought, and the fact that he recognises literary worth the moment he comes in contact with it, or that he discerns early the quality in other writers, points him out as a good critic.

Paradoxically as it may seem, the critic is better aware than the author of the purpose and trend of a book. As the good critic is the myriad-minded man with erudition and knowledge to build up the background of his criticism it stands to reason, that a long and trying apprenticeship is necessary for him to acquire that critical attitude necessary for things of the mind. Critics once born, are trained by example and practice, but those of the strongest temperaments are hatched outside the atmosphere of literary nurseries. The supreme (1) gift of the critic according to C. M. Drennan, is the possession of good taste. The belief in a single scale with unchangeable degrees has vanished for good.

No authoritative critic arranges poets in order, for one is not enjoyed because he is better than another, or because he gave his message in a period that is past, rather than at the present time. Attention to form exercises the mind of the critic; he does not regard it as the choice of material as its importance. Should poets be arranged in any order or scale of excellence the spiritual essence in them receives priority; style is considered; the use of words luminous, delicate and felicitous, is greatly appreciated, but a wide sympathy is the first condition and indispensable means of a critical intuition.

Some critics tend to express themselves unfavourably on all occasions, and debase their standards by subjecting them to personal taste and whim; others again, hold that it is the duty of the critic to encourage, where guidance and helpful

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(1) The Spirit of Modern Criticism. (C. M. Drennan).

comment stimulate the effort, and to discourage when the writer ceases to progress. Critics of today, as a whole, see more clearly than did the general body of critics of past epochs, due to the preaching of an old philosophy of freedom under the new names of pragmatism, modernism, humanism and symbolism. Expert knowledge is expected from critics which means knowledge, not of canons of a possible universal called beauty, but of particular laws. Tolerance, wide sympathies, and a kindly outlook are also expected from a good critic.

"The value of our criticism (1) is measured by the breadth of our sympathies, the acuteness and delicacy of our perceptions; and the hierarchy each of us establishes is valid only for the minds which find their own impression in ours."

As the inspired work of imaginative genius has always the character of a religious mystery, then no critic does full justice to his work unless he himself has the high instinct which is faith. To be adequate his criticism must itself be a work of inspiration, of the same spiritual reach and quality as the artists. The spirit which can understand and interpret a great work of art must be akin to that which has produced the work.

When the critic is of a philosophic or religious turn of mind, he naturally expects the expression of philosophy or religious intuition in the work of the author criticised. If he is of a realistic turn of mind, he looks to literature as material for the discovery of psychological truths, or as documents illustrating social history. If the critic is too practical a man, the aesthetic value of the work read is lost, for the practical man insists on facts rather than on literary charms; he demands results rather than aesthetics.

It might be mentioned here that a reviewer differs from a critic. The former collects the evidence, the latter adjusts the scales and weighs it; his theory of criticism is his balance and without that he must not be called a critic.

In conclusion, it is agreed that it is the critic's particular duty to indicate what he finds beautiful in an author's work and to point out what he considers of special merit. In jurisprudence, law is made by the decision of judges, so in criticism, the code of taste is formed by the dicta of eminent experts. The critic must beware of his subjective bias, and keep himself resolutely in accord with the common wisdom of humanity. In literature the term aesthetic beauty is reserved as a rule for pleasures of eye, ear and mind. When the critic draws our attention to what is beautiful in literature to the eye, to

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(1) *The Aesthete: Essays Speculative and Suggestive* (J. A. Symonds)

the ear, to the understanding, and such an experience gives rise to feeling of joy and happiness, then it is that the aesthetic in letters is reached, then it is that the critic's work is commendatory. Bees, according to Lucretius feed on the choicest flowers of the valley. A good writer selects and utilises the golden pregnant words, phrases and thoughts of others to enrich his own composition and to make more beautiful what at first seems to be quite satisfactory. The capable critic readily recognises any improvement thus made by a writer and he immediately pays tribute to the transformation made. Novelists usually deny that their characters are taken from life, but creation cannot proceed from a void, consequently all characters are really amalgams.

### CRITICISM OF POETRY.

Herder, the German literary authority asserted that poetry is the mother of mankind, that the first authors of every nation are its poets, that the earliest poetry is a nation's record, and being the most spontaneous it is the truest history. He wanted poetry to be said or sung, not read silently from a printed book, nor meditated on in silence and privacy. What Herder and Lessing did for poetry in Germany, Wordsworth and Coleridge achieved for England and they changed the whole course of literature by making people realise that poetry is the most potent of moral forces, since it is inspired by the highest reality. These two poets brought out, jointly, the Lyrical Ballads to illustrate their ideas. Their literary principles represented an aesthetic statement of the rights of man. Wordsworth, in particular, desired the ordinary man and the ordinary life to find expression in poetry—he made the familiar wonderful, and Coleridge, in his turn made the wonderful familiar. Wordsworth denied that there can be any such thing as diction—poetry per se. The proper language for poetry is the "language really used by men". Wordsworth utilised incidents and the situations of common life as the subject of poetry, and in his time such a literary principle was a revolution of vast importance. The "Biographia Literaria," is one of the greatest books on literature in any language.

Coleridge in poetry, criticism, psychology and philosophy, ranks among the first; he was the first English writer to evolve an aesthetic, and as a critic, his works belong to the philosophic—critical group. He maintained that great literature depends "on the action of significant mind on significant matter". Coleridge "charted the mind, marked it with signposts, illumined it with definition, and turned a blaze of light

on all the summits." He explained for all the writers who came after him, the difference between "genius and talent, imagination and fancy, prose and poetry, art and nature, consciousness and mysticism."

Saint Beuve, Madame de Stael, John Keats and Matthew Arnold were other literary critics of poetry who viewed literature from the aesthetic point of view. Saint Beuve's dictum was "tel arbre, tel fruit", but the fruit can be different from the tree, and the book different from the man who wrote it. Wordsworth, Keats, Poe, Baudelaire, played the philosopher's part in their discussions of the essence of poetry.

The majority of people Coleridge thought could not, and did not, penetrate far *trans conscientiam*. "The first range of hills that encircle the scanty vale of human life is the horizon for the majority of its inhabitants. On its ridge the common sun is born and departs; from them the stars arise and touching them, vanish. By the many, even this range, the natural limit and bulwark of the vale, is but imperfectly known. Its highest ascents are too often hidden by mists and clouds from uncultivated swamps, which few have the courage or curiosity to penetrate."

(1) Matthew Arnold in the preface to his selections from Wordsworth says "It is important therefore to hold fast to this: that poetry is at bottom a criticism of life; that the greatness of a poet lies in his powerful and beautiful application of ideas to life—to the question: How to live? To these critics and to a host of others, the literary world is deeply indebted. It is the critic who discovers the great artists—men who, according to M. A. Pink (2) "reach beyond their age to the mind of timeless humanity."

Poetry is necessary for intellectual nutrition and moral sustenance. It needs style too, but style alone is not sufficient. Nobility, finesse, delicacy and vivacity of expression should not be considered as the essential matter of poetic style. (3) With these something beautiful may be made but not poetry, something else is needed to animate that matter. The poet must place himself in accord with permanent emotion, the conservative forces of the race, he utters what contributes to the building up of vital structure in the social organism in order to gain more than a temporary or partial hearing. Though style is indispensable it is by matter and not by form that a poet takes

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(1) "Poems of Wordsworth." Chosen and edited by M. Arnold (1879).

(2) "Essay on Style." (M. A. Pink).

(3) Prayer and Poetry. (H. Bremond).

rank. Of the poetry of revolt and the poetry of indifference the latter has by far the slighter chance of survival. Tone counts for much in the poetry of revolt against morals, vulgarity is soon consigned to poetical perdition. What is said is the reality, the enduring quality of a work of art inheres therefore in its subject matter.

It is due to criticism that literary associations are observed—association with which poetry clothes many a wild or lovely spot; it is association that makes one place important, certain things sublime. Criticism attends to the variations in the speed of a poem, the equivalent syllables used, the elisions made, the beauty of the words chosen, the lines that haunt, the rhyme that is perfect; it notes the (1) four cardinal points of literary form—the description, presentation, poetry and prose, and like the cardinal points of the compass, they represent the four necessary directions in which literary activity moves. These four directions indicate furthermore the six elements of literary form: Epic and History, (description), Drama and Oratory, (Presentation), Lyric and Philosophy, (Reflection). It is due to criticism likewise that appreciation of magnificence in a poem, delicacy and modelling tone-values, breadth and fineness of touch, melodious splendour of language, exquisite finish, swift and subtle strokes of psychology, lucidity, grace, the inexhaustible fertility of variation and the use of the irreplaceable word to bring the thought to light, for “beautiful (2) words are the very light of the mind.”

Symonds, too, believed that the world would very willingly let die in poetry what has not contributed to its intellectual strength and moral vigour. (3) “Poetry must be poetry—if it fails in the essential qualities that constitute a work of art, it will soon sink into oblivion. The final test of greatness in a poet is his adequacy to human nature at its best; his feeling for the balance of sense, emotion, will and intellect in moral harmony; his faculty for regarding the whole of life and representing it in all its largeness.”

The more complex the poet's grasp of human nature as a whole, the more complete his presentation of life in organised complexity, the greater he will be. The whole struggle of the human race from barbarism to civilisation is one continuous effort to maintain and extend its moral dignity—therefore, artists who cannot aspire to greatness cannot be indifferent to

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(1) The Modern Study of Literature. (R. G. Moulton).

(2) Havell's Longinus.

(3) The Aesthete: Essays Speculative and Suggestive. (J. A. Symonds).

ethics. The poet's message must be satisfactory to healthy and mature humanity. The spiritual essence, too, plays a big part. Great poetry is the speech of soul to soul, but what it is exactly is difficult to define, for "poetry (1) like all the arts is essentially a 'mystery'. Its charm depends upon qualities which we can neither analyse accurately, nor reduce to rule, nor create again at pleasure." Poetry (2), like radium, always retains its inherent quality—it remains the essential of true life because of the unchanging instinct of man to give perfect shape to human thought, emotion and aspiration.

When poetry succeeds in its purpose, it is said to be beautiful. Anything astonishing and overwhelming in its emotional effects on people is termed the sublime. The sublime which is the true greatness of poetry is in general associated with obscurity in the idea represented. When perfection is secured, so that poetry becomes sublime, it is well to remember that nothing (3) is easier than the forfeit of such perfection, nothing more strenuous than to preserve it through life. "Sublimity is (4) so to say, the image of greatness of soul." The whole world is not wide enough for the soaring range of human thought, but man's mind often overleaps the very bounds of space. Keats (5) sensed the truth when he wrote "A thing of beauty is a joy forever: its loveliness increases: it will never pass into nothingness." "When a passage is pregnant in suggestion, when it is hard, nay impossible, to distract the attention from it, and when it takes a strong and lasting hold on the memory, then we may be sure that we have lighted on the true sublime."

Poems differ from poems in greatness; some are beautiful as the result of an indefatigable intuition, but exquisite poems can be morally dangerous, just as a plant that pleases when seen, is sometimes poisonous when eaten. (6) Supreme talent in a poet consists in writing very simply about complicated matters, so that every sentence, while charged with dramatic force, produces reflective passages which stir the depths of thought, causing happiness to the readers and making them feel the allurements of the call ad superiora, the poetic vocation. Such an experience is a poetic experience, it is in fact a gift of God, a grace, an activity essentially directed towards prayer as Mr. Middleton Murry holds, a statement with which Henri Bre-

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- (1) Prayer and Poetry. Henri Bremond).
  - (2) The Philosophy of Literature. (J. T. Bryan).
  - (3) The Sense of Beauty, (P. 267-268). (George Santayana)
  - (4) Havell's Longinus, P. 15, C. IX.
  - (5) Endymion. (Keats).
  - (6) Havell's Longinus. P. 12, Chap. VII.

mond (1) agrees. "It is a sort of knowledge, different from notional knowledge, a feeling of presence, a contact, a realisation, a 'real knowledge'." Wordsworth's *Prelude*, and the "Religious Poetae" of Patmore reflect the same thought. Poetry in its nature is strange. Some (2) may call it a prayer, but if it is a prayer, then paradoxically, it does not itself pray, but makes other people pray.

Perfection of form is as essential to poetry as to music. The forms of poetry may vary as infinitely as the thoughts that create them, but the form must fit the thought, as the body must appropriately clothe the spirit. The poet, too, must be concerned with his theme. The nucleus of all creative literature is the plot or the story; it lies at the back of every lyric epic and drama. A good story is a thing in itself, a source of beauty that needs no further justification. Poetry (3), too, has to seize its pattern from life and fix it; but life has never two patterns the same. Infinite variety is an essential quality of good poetry. A poet is one who, like Tennyson or Wordsworth, devotes himself primarily to poetry. There are not many great poets, for whom poetry was something incidental. A poet is always wise if he allows art to show him how best to use what nature has bestowed upon him.

If poetry has for its task the making of men perfect, then it follows that the mission of the poet is to teach, hence poetic knowledge is rational knowledge, in the strict sense of the term. The poet, however, does not teach everything; he teaches indirectly; he does not hoard up his experience for himself: the more magnificent poetry is, and therefore the more ineffable, the more the poet feels the need of communicating it. The poetic experience may be of the mystical order and writers (4) like Pere Marechal wish to throw the light of poetic experience, on to mystical experience. Other writers—fanatics of rationalism, while granting that poetical experience is no myth, yet refuse to associate it with mystical experience. Wordsworth, Marechal, St. Teresa, and a number of mystic writers refer to a poetic ecstasy. Bremond says the poet can be compared with a mystic. He holds that the mystics do not lose the physical, nor the psychological features that are natural to them; they are men like ordinary men; and he concludes his argument with this assertion, axiom as he calls it: that it is from the mystic that we can learn to understand the poet."

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(1) Poetry and Prayer. (Henri Bremond).

(2) *Ibid.*

(3) *The Philosophy of English Literature.* (J. Bryan).

(4) *Mysticism, Its True Nature and Value.* (A. B. Sharpe).

Poetry understood as most poetry-lovers have implicitly or explicitly understood it, consists, says Gerard Murphy in a special pattern imparted to sounds, images and thoughts, resulting in a special relation of suitability to the human mind. The perception of poetry as of other sorts of beauty is therefore essentially the perception of pattern or relation and as such belongs to the intellect. An intellect is necessary for the appreciation of poetry, but the senses play a part, too. Pascal describes two forms of mind—the geometric and the subtle mind, *l'esprit de geometrie* et *l'esprit de finesse*. Aptitudes formed in the intellect and influencing the senses are called in scholastic language "habitus". To the habitus of appreciating poetry critics today give the name of poetic sensibility. The habitus (1) of the poetry-lovers is different from the habitus of a metaphysician—the one lingers lovingly, as it were, round the particular; the other moves away from the materially-bound particular to the vast freedom of the universal.

Sir Redmond Barry (2) in a lecture delivered in Melbourne in 1872 maintained that poetry possesses the rare faculty of unfolding the most delicate and obscure emotions, of evolving from its hidden recess the germ of thought by progressive steps, expanding it into matured and lofty sublimity, and elevating the mind with the subject into the realms of fancy—while this effect is accelerated, refined, and heightened, by the aid of music. What statue, however exquisite, or painting, however excellent, can convey such a multitude of ideas as crowd upon the mind on reading a poem, whether it be a narrative, a lyric, a philosophic or even one on an apparently (3) trivial subject that the poet makes beautiful, even mysterious and exciting.

To enjoy poetry leisure is needed—in fact, poetry is a flower of leisure, but it is the expression in poetry which charms the reader and beautifies the design. Wordsworth held that the business of poetry is not so much the discovery of new truths, as the giving of new life to old ones; accordingly a good writer or speaker scores success by telling people what they already know, or according to Johnson "reminding them, taking a platitude and making of it an aphorism; or, by consecrating the common place, turning all things to loveliness, exalting the beauty and of that which is most beautiful making immortal, all that is best and most beautiful in the world."

G. M. Hopkins revived the poet's divine right to mean more than he can say. Hopkins gave a nonenclature to the intentions

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(1) The Irish Ecclest. Record, Oct. 1945. (Gerard Murphy.)

(2) Music and Poetry. (Sir Redmond Barry.)

(3) Literary Craftsmanship and Appreciation. (R. Fuller)



of his predecessor and contemporaries, a feature that the 20th century needed, hence a convincing reason for his influence today. It is partly due to Hopkins that poetry is aristocratic in its outlook—looking into the future for its golden age—an age, when it will be loved by everybody, and rise to great heights—due to the issue of a mind over-flowing with music, nobility of personality, lucid beauty of form, and an exquisite finish of workmanship.

This section concludes with a statement indicating the stages of poetical progression:

- (a) The stage where the apprehension is weak and evanescent, where little betrays the passage of the poetic current,
- (b) The lower poetical stage,
- (c) The poetical state—the quality of which is the desire to be communicable. The poetic gift characterises this stage.
- (d) The mystical state—the highest stage. Contemplatives have nothing to teach or tell people: they keep the secret of the king to themselves.

In class (a) the neophytes figure; (b) the ordinary poets appear; (c) the better poets are enrolled with an *os magna sonaturum*. (d) the mystics are observed, e.g., St. Teresa, the queen of mystical psychology, or Evelina Underhill one of the most modern mystics.

However, the field of poetry (1) has been so much enlarged, today, as a peep at most anthologies will indicate, that we are now compelled to recognise as poetry, many regions of human experience, many subtleties of human perception, which would have made our forefathers shudder. If poetry awakens emotions, if it kindles feeling in the breast of the reader, then it must be judged as good poetry, but technical (2) excellence alone or academic skill is of little avail if the emotional capacity is not stirred.

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(1) *Essay on Style*. (M. A. Pink).

(2) *The Development of Australian Literature*. (H. G. Turner & A. Sutherland.)

## CHAPTER TWELVE.

### 1 GENERAL CRITICISM OF AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE.

In the (1) strict logical sense of the word there is no such thing as an Australian Literature, no more than there is a South African, a Canadian, or even an American Literature, but as literature always takes the colour and expresses the temper of the national life, as the environment of thought in a country generally appertains to what is accomplished in it, as a nation's literature and philosophy have a way of looking at things differently from the mind of other nations, consequently, we are justified in speaking of an Australian literature, and the object of this section is to offer a criticism of that literature termed by people of today Australian Literature.

The criticism offered in these pages must not be considered as a complete or exhaustive one; it is more of a selective and exclusive type; it does not even profess to tabulate the greatest works that have been written, or to analyse the literary methods used or the varieties of style employed, or to inform whether the poets were interested in the transmission of ideas. The criticism is more a statement indicating that there are certain definite characteristics in Australian literature, that certain qualities have been observed, that peculiar features occasionally obtrude themselves, that an elusive quality, native to Australia is noticeable in its poetry and prose, and finally that a distinctive national literature has already manifested itself, not one depending wholly on its landscape, or on its geographical factors, but on something more essential, an outlook upon eternal things and the use of themes that suit the Australian mind, a development of its own culture. "The poet (2) draws his life from the latent forces of the country, and in his turn gives form to that which must otherwise remain unrevealed to men."

For many years Australia, from a literary point of view, suffered from the Colonial complex. Australian literature derived its inspiration from the English soil and landscape; it brought with it to the Austral shores the seeds of English culture, the English language, spirit and tradition. Whatever aspired to be new in Australia was burdened to an extent with much that was old—the maternal origin was difficult to supplant, the in-

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(1) *The Beginnings of an Australian Literature.* (A. Patchett Martin, 1898).

(2) *Appraisals of Canadian Literature.* (Lionel Stevenson).

fluence of the mother culture coloured all its literary efforts. For many years, too, Australia's economic inferiority, and her dependence on England and the European countries for very many of her commodities, and the resulting dependence that such a condition necessitated, was not to be changed and cancelled by a mere gesture. Up to 1900, the works of English writers, poets and prosemen, were the only people considered in the Australian universities and schools (the same in some respects holds true to this day). Few Australian books were available for study or even for reference, and any literary criticism had not the support of a native cultural tradition, for the Australian culture was mainly derivative. However, as there exists an imperial (1) link in literature as well as in politics, Australian literature willingly accepts whatever is distinctive in English literature, it profits by it, it utilises it to the full and improves on its style and method of expression, but it also maintains its own vigorous, colourful and independent literary method.

According to J. Bryan, "there (2) is an infinite range of quality in literature; it is as varied as the aspects of life itself; it is a manifestation of goodness, beauty and truth, the highest conception of the universal. No author is quite independent of the social and cultural atmosphere he breathes, but must in some measure be a manifestation of contemporary thought." The quality in Australian Literature varies considerably. Moreover, what was once considered good, has by the verdict of time ceased to make the same enthusiastic appeal. Gordon's poetry was regarded for many decades as being supreme; today, the admirers of its quality are fewer, the appraisers are less certain of its aesthetic appeal, even though "Gordon Society Lovers", keep his name fresh, and the devotion of posterity has placed his bust in Westminster Abbey, among the great princes, peers, and poets, of old England. Again, "Robbery Under Arms", was once held to be an outstanding work—a novel that faithfully depicted the movements of the society that Rolf Boldrewood knew, yet the writer wrote too much in the same strain to be accounted a man of genius. The work suits the adolescent—it is entertaining and full of incident, but no one reads the book a second time. The poem, "Convict Once", by Brunton Stephens, once praised for its vigour is now forgotten, or rarely alluded to: its literary quality no longer attracts attention.

A European author is educated in an atmosphere saturated with history; his country is over-loaded with monuments of human handiwork; his natural landmarks are associated with events or legends; the national, social, and religious features of

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(1) Australian Literature. Vol. 1. P. 16. (E. Morris Miller).

(2) Philosophy of Literature. (J. Bryan).

his country have all helped to form a tradition. In Australia (1) all such helps were lacking. No classical mythology existed for the play of the imagination; no folk-lore interested its people; stories springing from the soil of the land, or utterances of the great minds of the race, describing the past of its ancestors, were all missing. Now after 150 years of existence, Australian literature depicts definite places and conditions of life, it recreates human character in contact with environment; it endeavours to interpret the riddle of life; it offers to students a fascinating field for the study of influences, since literature (2), like all art, is a social fact and contributes worthy messages to the general life of society; it is an application of ideas to life. "We get to early Australian literature through the Mother Country," said C. B. Fletcher, "the work had to be done under difficulties. The literature of the churches helped; as the ferment for freedom worked, it was invigorated by the advent of immigrants. Through the literature of one hundred years runs a steady stream of writing, which tells a story of wonderful achievement following on endless toil and unceasing endeavour."

Literature is not afraid to be honest and independent, it carries the unmistakable stamp and the irresistible charm of genuineness in feeling, fancy and expression. The literature of Australia in its early stages touched life and nature at only a few points; the work of its individual authors was often limited in quantity, spasmodic in effort, and uneven in quality. No superior genius from the summits of the assembled results of the various specified branches of knowledge gave a vision of the far-off goals or hoped to divine the future ways for his country, even though A. H. Adams (3) in 1872, discovered in Australian literature a keenness of perception, a zest for the recording of striking impressions, and an element of precision that was peculiar to them. Australia, since 1850, has had isolated masterpieces; outstanding intellects, poets and worthwhile novelists, have been noted in each decade of its history; sufficient racial and national pride has existed to appreciate the Australian culture, and materials for literature have been always ample and varied. Australia until recent years lacked a general artistic awareness, an understanding of contemporary life, and the ability to give the stamp of universal to what has been inspired by the particular. Too often there was a tendency to discredit anything produced in Australia.

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(1) "A Century in the Pacific," edited by Jas Colwell.

(2) Philosophy of Literature. (J. I. Bryan).

(3) An Outline of Australian Literature. (H. M. Green).

The Centennial magazine (1888) published some essays of Francis Adams—a writer, who wrote about Australian Society and outlook. He suggested new standards to the people of Australia, and he impressed several of her writers, in particular A. G. Stephens, Bernard O'Dowd and Mary Gilmore. In 1894, Colonel Geo. Bell (1), U.S. Consul, while examining Australian Literature became aware of an over-weening spirit of fault-finding with everything colonial, a lack of respect for colonial ability, especially when referring to statesmen, orators, journalism, authors or poets. "Too many lived in the mental atmosphere of Merry England; there they saw the materialised effects of 1,000 years, while Australia was not 100 years old. England possessed stupendous wealth, vast and enchanting cities, a commerce dwarfing all rivals, a majestic social system." No wonderful intellectual achievement, he claimed, could be attained until people thought more of their own country. Colonel Bell remarked that people in Australia were well read, but not well-instructed; there were no magazines, no permanent periodicals while much intellectual force was misdirected. He found in New South Wales excellent prose work and he admired many of the literary and journalistic sketches that came under his notice.

Dr. J. E. Neild addressing the Royal Society of Victoria, March 21st 1889, said that the Royal Society was founded for the advancement of the Sciences, Literature and Arts. (2) Up to 1889, it had given its attention only to science. It had been asserted regretfully, sometimes scornfully, that there was no Australian Literature, other than periodical matter—but after careful sifting, he discovered a residuum—"Australia has poets, story tellers, historians, whose records it would be a calamity to lose, essayists whose writings deserved to become classics. Of dramatic work there was only a little, while the bulk of the literature was periodical. The newspapers were of a very superior kind. Victoria deserves to be congratulated for the literary progress made in so short a time."

In religion the blood of martyrs forms the seed of a church: rough treatment, wars and avalanches, national disasters and economic trials, are essential to make the flower of literature flourish. Australia has had no great wars, nor any great national disaster as yet, but its pioneering days, its fights with pests, its frequent droughts, its summer bush fires, its trying inland, have been quite sufficient to create seed, and provide inspiration for the development of literature; the Australian national environment made a decided appeal to its first literary children, with the

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(1) "Cosmos," Cosmos Publ. Co. Ltd. (Sydney, 1894).

(2) On Literature and the Fine Arts in Victoria (J. E. Neild).

result that the poetry and prose reflected the efforts, contacts and attitude of its early arrivals towards things at large. Art science and literature are extremely sensitive to surrounding and impinging influences—climate, soil, landscape, industrial pursuits, etc., all impress themselves on a people's literature, especially in poetry and romance. It is true that poets are born, but they must be nourished; there can be no inspiration, unless there is something to inspire. Australians always keenly sensitive (1) to their geographical isolation, absorbed the spirit as well as the letter of ancient and modern literatures and they, too, imbibed of the best in the literature of the world.

It has been complained the Australia sometimes confuses material wealth with true greatness; that because she has an enormous territory and a scattered population she is, ipso facto, a great power, and that with commerce and the pursuit of riches as the deity, literature and science, art and philosophy, religion and ethics, are contemptuously thrown aside. It is also possible that such a criticism as the above is without foundation, that it represents a conclusion unsupported by facts. The people of Australia are keen on literature, science, art and ethics. Sufficient evidence exists to show the Australians' partiality to the noblest minstrel and to the one whose ability enables him to produce a good story, provided, of course, that the author is dependent on the social and cultural atmosphere he breathes, and that his work is in some measure a manifestation of contemporary thought. It is possible to have delightful characters, beautiful style, a winning personality on the part of writer, but the story he tells needs some driving force, some dramatic quality, otherwise the novel fails in the popular sense, and as an expression of the aesthetic its appeal is lost.

Australian literature while it willingly chants a hymn of progress, has not received much criticism—in fact, some maintain that it does not understand criticism, since it has had so little of it. Absence of criticism tends to produce complacency, and such a position represents retardation, for if we wish to go some where, and attain to some result, there must be an inner conviction that we have not yet already arrived there. Australian literary criticism in the past has been quite inadequate; if it were better, and the true critics more numerous, the literature would have been nobler, better and capable of the loftiest flights. Apart from D. H. Deniehy (1860); A. H. Adams (1872); A. W. Jose (c. 1890); D. M. Wright (c. 1900); J. F. Archibald (c. 1890) and A. T. Strong (1905) there have not been many critics, whose verdicts were regarded as authoritative, but, A. G. Stephens (1900)

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(1) Australian Literature. (E. Morris Miller).

was perhaps one of the ablest and most discerning of them all. He loved the best in literature, and believed that no matter how well a man wrote, he could still do better. His literary and aesthetic monument was the excellent work he extracted from others.

Unfortunately, among some Australian writers too conscious an effort to be an Australian has been noticeable. Some writers not content to let the nation and the country be the setting in which their subject was framed, wished to make the country and the nation themselves the subject. By writing to arouse a thrilling patriotism for their native land, they sometimes missed the essentials in literature; their works lacked the true realistic touch and by attending too rigorously to the regional area, neglected the dominant features; they should have known that literature is most wholesome when human pursuits are domestic, industrial, commercial, ethical, intellectual, but not military; that it depends upon impacts from without, no less than upon impetus from within, that literature is concerned with the best in life and civilisation; that if the material be old, the resulting structure must be new, and that the spirit is more important than the material and the means, if the result is to be great. "Though (1) literature must be always a new creation, it has to be created out of the past, so that the new has always some relation to the old. Every new idea is the child to an old one and so creation is never more absolute in literature than in any other art.

Professor R. C. Bald (2) felt that no Australian writer had yet mastered his material, i.e. the life around him, sufficient to establish a tradition and to furnish an example which other writers could respect, admire and follow. Tradition in literature is essential before any literature has the right vitality. B. O'Dowd's poems, and those by Dorothea McKellar, manifested signs of the true type, but more writers, he maintained, must be conscious of a real national feeling; there must be no veneer over the *amor patriae* structure. Modern (3) Australian literature, showed too little of the influence of over-seas culture, and too much of over-sea commercialism, debased romanticism and fourth rate realism.

Australians in their early literary efforts followed the models in art and literature of the English writers, but in recent years, the tendency is to follow American, French, Canadian and European types but not slavishly. What is worth while is accepted,

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- (1) *Philosophy of Literature*. (Bryan).
  - (2) *Manuscripts*, Lib. Geelong, No. 4, 1933.
  - (3) *Southerly* (April, 1941). (N. Bartlett).

what is unsatisfactory is neglected. People who have too few models of their own, and who are not familiar with the recorded expressions of human experience, are likely to be pedantic in their writing, or vacuously dull—even though at times they may show a streak of life and genius. The thought more than the form makes literature, for literature is a way leading to fuller light; it must have meaning and equally with all true art stands for truth. The eternal (1) quest of la vraie vérité goes on in Australia as elsewhere, in poetry, painting, sometimes even in music, and the artists of each successive generation are for ever looking for what is not to be found. "All poetry (2), all great art, all higher culture, all civilisation, in fact, is based on some sort of metaphysic, because that element of aspiration towards something which is not of this world is one of the fundamental powers of the soul."

Some Australian literature is concerned with the apocalyptic, some with the symbolistic, some with the mystic, but most deals with the descriptive and the realistic. Among the writers we find the social artist, the seer, the political philosopher and the humanitarian. Among the poets are found balladists and mere verse-maners, those gifted with the lyrical flame and those philosophical (3) poets who are interested in ideas, those who bring to the contemplation of ideas the forms and habits of the poetic mind.

"Six (4) of our great writers presented to their readers and admirers an undertone of melancholy, not because of anything in the country they described, but because the seeds of melancholy existed in the writers. Many of the Australian writers were gay e.g. Brunton Stephens and Gordon McCrae, nor even was Charles Harpur by any means gloomy. Australian writers, like writers of all countries, wrote for their own country first, but by degrees now their literature is tending to spread beyond the borders of the continent to other lands and to other nationalities.

The literature of a country reveals the relationship existing at any time between "personality" and "society", interior and exterior influences, culture and civilisation, and indicates, too, its aesthetic. It points out unmistakably whether its advance on the road to Parnassus was a materialistic one, with intelligence as the basic factor, or whether the advance was a spiritual one, with an emphasis on human relations, tolerance, the moral sense

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(1) *Roots of Change*. (J. H. Fichter).

(2) *Studies in Philosophical Poetry*. (D. Saurat).

(3) *Studies in Philosophical Poetry*. (D. Saurat).

(4) *The Australian Critic*. (Oct. 1st, 1890).



the social spirit, the religious attitude and the super human aspiration.

Poets, musicians, painters, novelists—all creative artists, in fact, have their periods of incubation, and their more or less sudden moments of release of strain and of satisfactory vision. Croce termed such a stage a spiritual aesthetic synthesis. Australian writers and artists, as a whole, would seem to have passed from their period of gestation to the position, when now we can expect that the genius of its people will produce in its literature something of great social interest, something with a quality inherent in it which will make a wide appeal to the cultured mind, and something whose aesthetic value will attract world attention and commendation.

If Australian literature is always in colour, form, and feeling, in keeping with the future life and destiny of a great country, it will always have its own literature; important events will arouse latent powers; patriots will awaken dormant energies and momentous problems will find their solution. The Australian novel will always retain an intimate relationship to the mind of the age, and with its own art and literature developed, with its aesthetic plainly discernible, it will be considered as grown up, matured sufficiently to take rank with the great literatures of the world.

Literature, it must be remembered, is a social institution rather than something pertaining to the individual; it is the lens that brings life to a proper perspective for accurate observation and understanding; it enables the imaginative life of an individual to be full and complete, and it often reveals it to himself in a way that he never suspected. If the greatest art is the art of life, then literature is the highest aesthetic expression of that life.

#### CRITICISM OF AUSTRALIAN POETRY.

It has been generally agreed that the Australian has specialised in poetry, and that the continent is particularly rich in the number of its poets, from the time when W.C. Wentworth wrote his first poem "Australia" submitted for the Chancellor's Medal in London, and "Wild (1) Notes from the Lyre of a Native Minstrel" by Charles Thompson (1826), down to the present day, when our poets are saying something worth saying, with perfection, truth, vision and simplicity as their ideal. Many Australian poets have been termed mere verse writers; others figure under the heading of popular poets; others again can be described as national poets, but a number because of special

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(1) Albion Press. Sydney. 1926.

excellence, or of perfection of form or the expression of a rare beauty, show their greatness by their power to restamp the old currency of the commonplace with a new image—or who make out of old truth an ordinary life. Some poets in Australia, like Gosse (England), look on literature from a purely literary and aesthetic point of view; others appear to be purely concerned with the mystery of things and perhaps come under the heading of mystical poets: most deal with problems of human thought and life. As (4) all poems, stories, essays, treatises, etc., are modes of interpretative thinking, they cannot be devoid of philosophy, the main function of all literature is spiritual idealisation, and consequently all literature is an interpretation of life.

As poetry is a work of the imagination, it contains some germs of philosophy; the closer it comes to life and reason, the more pregnant is its philosophical significance. Some poetry is known as philosophical poetry and the poets associated with it are known as philosophical poets. Philosophical poetry besides dealing with subjects of a philosophic nature is always critical (1) and its criticism deals with the organisation of the most subtle and important human experiences. In the philosophical (2) poets of a race the very soul can be seen. The soul of a race expresses itself synthetically—its dreams and its intelligence, its knowledge and its desires. Philosophical poets distinguish (3) the true from the false, the subtle psychological facts of refined human thought and feeling, they bring into life the necessary basis for exact explanation for poets are by nature and tradition name-givers to things subtle.

Since literature begins when man has acquired a character capable of thinking about and doing something worthy of writing about, something worth remembering, he sings about it first, consequently poetry is older than prose, and in Australia the poet made his appearance before the prose-man. Poetry has a great character in its interpretation of life and conduct. The immortal music, the eternal truths, the joyous singing quality, the buoyancy of life that is its peculiar attribute, the finer spirit of true knowledge, the impassioned expression, the thought more than the form; the eternal truths it conveys, are all characteristics of poetry that enable it to withstand all the attacks of time.

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(1) Studies in Philosophical Poetry. (D. Saurat).

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid.

(4) The Philosophy of Literature. (J. I. Bryan).

stage, and who perhaps will be more appreciated, and their great merit acknowledged, when years have passed and when more competent critics have given attention and minute study to its literary aesthetic. Saints often wait centuries before canonisation, and even great characters must die before their worth is satisfactorily appraised. If the march of the human mind is slow, the verdict of commendation, the recognition of merit on the part of individuals is only recognised after generations have passed.

The Australian poets even from 1850 were noted for different things:—Charles Harpur for his high aspiring and his charming simplicity; Kendall for displaying the spirit of the bush and the personal touch; Adam Lindsay Gordon for his melodious rhymes and his manly pulse of youth; Victor Daley for his colour of phrase, his decorative mind, his tender touch; Henry Lawson for his truthful glimpses of life, his view of the Australian manner, his human personality; George Gordon McCrae for his musical diction and graceful imagery. To this list, other names—poets who figured chiefly from 1900 to the present day must be added:—A. B. Paterson, F.S. Williamson, James Hebblethwaite, J. B. O'Hara, Hubert Church, Christopher Brennan, John Shaw Neilson, Bernard O'Dowd, E. J. Brady, "Furnley Maurice" and a great many others. All of the above showed specific qualities, but in particular Hubert Church was noted for his beautiful thoughts and harmonious passages, Neilson for his poetical emotion and his lyrical sweetness, O'Dowd for his keener intellect and buoyant poetry, "Furnley Maurice" (1) (F. L. Wilmot) for his fiery indignation and faultless short poems and finally, Frank S. Williamson for his beauty of phrase e.g.,

"Chiming, chiming, chiming in the pauses of the gale  
How the magpies' notes came ringing down the mountain, o'er  
the vale."

"Lawson," according to A. G. Stephens, "at his best commands a stronger heart-beat than most of his compeers; he may lack grace and elegance, but when he both feels and writes, the flood of his power sweeps away cavils and demurrers. He is so very human that one's humanity cannot but welcome him."

No attempt is made here to classify the poets, or even to arrange them in chronological order: it would be a herculean task to name them all. In the past hundred years many have come and gone: some are now forgotten; inadequate means of publication withheld their work from finding an appreciative

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(1) *An Outline of Australian Literature.* (H. M. Green).

audience; and the tendency today is to lean heavily on those who are still living, or who have died in recent years.

"Furnley Maurice," as a poet dealt with many phases of philosophy, nature, rebellion, war and its spiritual effects. His poems on children's ways are charming in their simplicity and originality. Bernard O'Dowd is often spoken of as the poet of Australia. He insists that poetry is militant i.e. that poetry has a purpose, and he maintains that the greatest poetry is poetry with an objective, poetry that subtly perhaps, but really persuades. O'Dowd maintains furthermore, that if the poet cannot persuade, most of the truly magical weapons of his high calling are blunted. Rhetoric is not only not inconsistent with poetry; it is also, by reason of its carrying power, an indispensable requisite of great poetry. "The Bush" is O'Dowd's masterpiece. The poem contains grandeur in its rolling and sonorous lines; a wealth of picturisation exists in its stanzas. A vision of the glory of Australia and love of her soil unattained by any other poet, would seem to represent its chief contribution. While O'Dowd's images are magnificent, yet his technique is occasionally severe and in this poem as well as in his other poems and his sonnets, it is possible that they fail to find an appreciative audience, for the reason that they lack simplicity. Strong sincerity, loftiness of aim, powerful and intensive original conception, and fine classical scholarship are features in which O'Dowd excels.

One of Australia's greatest poets was Christopher J. Brennan—born in Sydney in 1870. As a youth, a student and a University lecturer, he was the scholar rather than the poet. According to Professor A. R. Chisholm (1) had Brennan worked consistently, he could have produced a world-famous volume of criticism—he was a better talker than writer—he was an Australian Dr. Johnson but without a Boswell to seize and crystallise his thought. Brennan was influenced by German romanticism and French symbolism.

The influence of the French writers Baudelaire, Rembaud and Mallarmé were apparent in his work e.g. "Stars of the Casement" and "Silence after Bells." In 1897 he published "Towards the Source"—a small book containing 21 poems. In 1913 appeared "Poems" a volume with a title page designed by Lionel Lindsay. Viewing his poems as a whole they fail to make a popular (2) appeal, perhaps they are too mystical, too illusive in meaning, too carried away with symbolic imagery.

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(1) Lecture delivered July, 1935.

(2) Australian Literature. (E. Morris Miller).

Brennan according to a reliable authority, is one of the finest classical scholars that Australia has produced. (1) "His poetry is coloured deeply by his scholarship, yet he is essentially a romantic. His poetry is marked by beauty, individuality, imagery, power, a mastering of the craft and art of poetry, a loftiness of spirit making lyric the cry of the mind as well as of the heart." Brennan is a metaphysical poet, a mystic: he was for Australia what Francis Thompson was for England. What makes Brennan's work not only unique in Australian poetry, but also a poetry of the first interest to all concerned with the art, is the fact that he attempted to assimilate French symbolism to English verse, and in doing so almost necessarily concentrated on the internal mental and emotional life of man in contrast to his external and active life.

Only one edition of most of Brennan's best work has been published, and this is all the more strange, when competent critics like Randolph Hughes, L. H. Allen, J. D. le Gay Brereton, H. M. Green and Hugh McCrae, regarded him as incomparably Australia's greatest poet. The characteristic of his poetry is its obscurity—he is in reality the poet of the intellectuals, but more than scholarship is needed to appreciate his ability—one must have a definite poetic soul, for Brennan "penetrated (2) behind the concrete as it rudely presents itself to the ordinary man—he touched on an inexhaustible mine of new material but circumstances interfered with its development."

If Australia according to its anthologies has numerous poets, it is also rich in its lyrics—poetry of the highest literary form, since it has the maximum of sheer ecstasy untainted by mundane considerations. Without something of the lyric quality in it, no poetry succeeds. The pure lyric is the *sine qua non* of any country's literature. The lyric is the expression of the unutterable beauty of the world, and it is probable that Kendall's poems appeal to every one, because "of the rich lurid glow about them; like the hot winds they seem to scorch from their fiery vehemence; some portions are scented with golden bloom of wattle and reflect the beauty and freshness of spring". Masefield regarded Kendall as the best Australian poet. His (3) best work possesses the most important of all literary qualities, sincerity, and probably because of that he has earned the affection of all lovers of poetry.

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(1) An Outline of Australian Literature. (H. M. Green).

(2) Australian Literature. (E. Morris Miller).

(3) An Outline of Australian Literature. (H. M. Green).

Among the lyricists may be noted, James Hebblethwaite, who wrote poetry with a delicious, distinct poetic quality, John le Gay Brereton in his "Sea and Sky" gave readers an idea of the beauty of melody, while Bertram Stevens indicated in his compositions care, erudition and critical discrimination. J. B. O'Hara possessed the true poet's feeling of life and beauty; he displayed fine pictorial power and rhetorical appeal; he had the instinct of time; he was (1) the Australian master of harmonies. In all his works "the dress is beautiful, the choice of words unique, the melody and music soul-stirring—such is O'Hara's claim to greatness.

Australian women were numerous, too, in the lyric line e.g. Marie E. J. Pitt, Mary Gilmore, Gertrude Hart, Ruth M. Bedford, Dorothea Mackellar and many others. The last named will always be remembered by the following lines:—

"An opal hearted country  
A wilful lavish land,  
All you that have not loved her,  
You will not understand.

Though earth holds many splendours  
Wherever I may die,  
I know to what brown country  
My homing thoughts will go.

Jennings Carmichael was for many years Australia's sweetest singer of the bush, and became the first poetess to be recognised by an overseas audience. Victor Daley was a most graceful writer of lyrics. "The Man from Snowy River and Other Verses," published in 1895 and composed by A. B. (Banjo) Paterson had sale for 50,000 copies. F. S. Williamson was at his best in

"She comes as comes the summer night,  
Violet perfumed, clad with stars;  
To heal the eyes hurt by the light,  
Flung by day's brandished scimitars."

while Gay the lyricist sings:

"Dear lovely flower that liftest up  
Among the grass thy golden cup;  
I take thee from thy earthly bed,  
And plant thee in my heart instead,"

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(1) "The Spirit that Lives." (D. H. Rankin).

It is safe to maintain that the lyrics of John Shaw Neilson are difficult to surpass: e.g.

"Let your song be delicate,  
The skies declare  
No war—the eyes of lovers  
Wake everywhere" . . .

In his "Orange Tree" the poet shows consciously or unconsciously that there is something in life, in the finite world that is wafted from the infinite, that there is light around, if only we will look which "never was on sea or land."

Some of the Australian poets like Paterson, Lawson, John Farrell, Edward Dyson, E. J. Brady, etc., graduated in the school of journalism with the Sydney "Bulletin" as their nursing mother; some others like Adam Lindsay Gordon, George Essex and Frank Williamson appeared to be naturally gifted, and produced their work, and sang their songs, without guidance from another, or homely and salutary criticism from periodical or newspaper. Some scholarly poets like Christopher Brennan, J. le gay Brereton, Archibald Strong, "Furnley Maurice", Bernard O'Dowd, Elsie Cole and Mary Gilmore, needed no apprenticeship, but submitted their work with confidence in the result to a critical and oftentimes illogical public.

Some of the Australian poets wrote for the more cultured life of the church, the university and the artistic world; some possessed the magic touch which enobled life's common things; some, too, as philosophical (1) poets played a very special part between philosophy and religion and science; others again were more scientific and literary than aesthetic; almost all glowed with a warm national feeling. An occasional one cut loose from his ancient moorings for there is no uniformity among poets in poetic method, or in personal taste, or in ostensible subject; they are as varied as the land itself. Twice in the history of Australian literature was the lute temporarily silenced by the war-drum, when our men went overseas to fight for justice and defence of their fatherland. It is safe to say that the soil, the scenery, the sunshine, the surroundings and the country gave to the majority of Australian poets the opportunity of describing with graceful ease and undying charm the thoughts, deeds, and interests of the whole people they depicted, the spirit of the age they dealt with and the beauties of culture.

While Australian literature boasts of the number of its poets, melody—the soul of all poetry is often missing in the work of recent writers. Fancy, too, in some cases is mistaken for

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(1) Studies in Philosophical Poetry. (D. Saurat).

imagination, and aspiration for inspiration. Everyone should know that there is no poetry without melody, the lines must sing in tune of time, or the perfect marriage of emotion with words, the transport of literature the last ecstasy of the lyre is lost. "Magnificence (1) of mind is wanting in the present-day poetry", said Mrs. Sackville West. The defect of that quality is noticeable in Australian poetry. The Sophoclean Art—a diction pitched to the grave quality of the theme, and a harmony of all the elements of composition—would give Australian poetry a resultant majesty that it often lacks—the lyrical trend is perhaps too much in evidence.

Australia has had several sonnet writers like T.G. Tucker, A. T. Strong and William Gay—the writer of a stimulating sonnet on Australian Federation. Gay's sonnet is considered the most perfect thing of its kind in Australian literature. Percival Serle (2) in his recent publication notes the marked improvement in Australian poetry since Michael Robertson's odes appeared on the scene (1810-1821) the first poetical expression to be printed in Australia, down to the present day. He holds that with a slight improvement of technique there will be found among the poets more vision and imagination, more evidence of intellectual strength and more variety of theme

Australian poets would probably score better, and make an appeal to a wider circle of readers and appreciators, if they wrote on subjects of historic interest, or told stories of events that have happened, of deeds that were done, of men and women that have lived in their land, or even of imaginative work, or matter based partly on historical foundation and partly imaginative. Scott, Tennyson and Wordsworth, Arnold and Coleridge, etc., impressed all their readers with their stories e.g. Scott with his poem "The Lady of the Lake," Tennyson with his Arthurian Legends, Wordsworth with his Lucy Stories, etc., Coleridge with his "Ancient Mariner". In Australian poetry there are a few interesting stories like "The Sick Stock Rider," by Adam Lindsay Gordon; "The Star of Australasia", by Henry Lawson; "Clancy of the Overflow," by A. B. Paterson; and "Happy Creek" by J. B. O'Hara but there should be many more. "The Story is the Thing" makes a powerful appeal even in poetry, and with young people in class, success is assured when the poem assumes the story form. The memorising of the verses, the quotations from the poem, the style, metre, beauty, underlying philosophy etc., all become interesting and of value for future poetry lessons as well as for making young students love poetry.

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(1) Poetry and the Criticism of Lite. (H. W. Garrod).  
 (2) An Australian Anthology. (P. Serle 1946).



Australian poems in many cases are too short. Sweetness in a poem is admirable, quality is essential, but sufficient material is also an advantage. "Australia to England," by John Farrell; "The Women of the West," by George Essex Evans, are of sufficient length, but the impression received from an Australian Anthology is that two or three stanzas represent a poem, or that a page of five or six verses is a sufficient contribution to make an author rank with the greatest, or that his poem belongs to the timeless. Another criticism levelled at Australian verse is the deficiency of imagery noticeable in the creations.

Australia, while possessing poets who have figured prominently in literary circles and writers who have been noted for the sensibility which lies behind their poetry, and for their aesthetic contribution to the literature of their land, has not yet had a poet of the greatest order—a Shakespeare, a Milton, a Dante. So far most of the poets have been treading the middle course between imagination and fact, or they lack the sustained ecstasy of imagination which was the birthright of the greatest poets; many bring into their poetry the atmosphere of the Australian lands, with all its delicate changes and shifting colours. The great poet in any century and in any land is a phenomenon; and as Australia is still a young country with a literature scarcely one hundred years old, there is ample time for him yet to make his appearance. Charming lyrics, stirring ballads, verse stamped with the hall-mark of sincere emotion have come from the mints of lesser minds, and have brought pleasure to all sorts of people.

In 1944 at a meeting of the Australian Literature Society in Melbourne, Bernard O'Dowd gave a lecture on "A Spot of Heresy." During the war (1914-1918) and since then, he maintained, a school of poetry developed in England and America—the characteristic of which was a departure from the forms and criteria of poetry as known by those who loved or practised the art before that period. The innovation, he believed, could be called the poetry of disillusionment—a style represented by T. S. Eliot, Auden, Spender, Dan Lewis and others, tracing back the idea to Ezra Pound in America, Marinette in Italy and Verlaine in France. A number of names were coined to cover the movements of innovation, such as symbolism, imagism, impressionism, neo-impressionism, cubism, dadaism, sur-realism, etc.—words taken from painting developments.

The new style, he insisted, did away with the repetition of the older way; its enthusiastic advocates pruned choking undergrowth and superfluous branches in the forest of song, for all human creations, even that with the long ancestry of high poetry, are capable of improvement. All human values must

submit themselves to be re-valued and any sacro-sanct reputation in poetry, art, history, etc., is liable in the course of time, and for the benefit and progress of the race, to be upset.

The impelling motive of the movement, he claimed, was artistic—an assertion of beauty as an end in itself, and a determination to give to poetry beauty of vision, diction and music. The writers were in quest of a purer poetry, neither didactic, nor rhetorical, nor sentimental, but passionate and lyrical.

(1) "In politics a revolution destroys in its thoughtless fury, noble as well as base institutions and ideals, so the riotous exuberance of symbolism under its different names withers in the groves of the muses, not only the scrub and the mistletoe, but also the palms and the pines thereof. In Australia distance and common sense saved her literature, until recently, from the dangerous consequence of the European and American disillusionment. Mallarmé had influenced Christopher Brennan and in recent years the English and American fashion took possession of a number of Australian writers. The new method under the title of "Modern Poetry" found ready supporters who practised its methods and advertised its uniqueness but in fact, they divorced poetry from the people more thoroughly than ever happened before. In the "Modern Poetry" there may be some merit; the shackles of the 18th century poet may have been shaken off; but they show little indebtedness to the predecessors who made their work possible. Modern Poetry has a tendency to write hidden thoughts or experiences of the writers in a maze of words, beautiful enough, sometimes, as words, but not understandable to even fairly intelligent readers. Moderns banish the ballad, but it is by the ballad that poetry makes intimate contact with the people"

"Modern poetry would seem to exile personification, to be hostile to the adjective, to forbid eloquence, i.e., rhetoric. Personification may be abused, but in good poetry it is allowable, in fact, it is the original tool of the poet. The adjective too has played a high part in transmitting thought into poetry and in evoking."

Bernard O'Dowd is a puritan in the poetic field; his theory of poetry is a philosophic one; its objective, he claims, is "to (2) subserve science and everything else that makes for the best interests of humanity." He knows that English literature is the flower of England's life and thought; and his desire was to have Australian literature—a phase of English litera-

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(1) An Address by Bernard O'Dowd.

(2) An Outline of Australian Literature. (H. M. Green).

ture illuminating the springs of contemporary thought and action, recognised in the world of the spirit for Australia—a land of beauty, vastness and potentiality of nature, is able to provide its artists and poets with all the inspiration they need and the experience that maturity demands.

The poetry produced by Australians indicates the type of the Australian aesthetic. As the poetry is philosophical in some cases, mystical in other cases, intellectual in most cases and again, as in the case of John Shaw Neilson, the thought is exquisitely expressed, it can be said with justice that since the thought is either religious, philosophic, creative, intellectual, peaceful, and the contemplation a poetic one, the aesthetic is thus of a highly spiritualised order. The poet for the Australian is an historian, a prophet, an artist, a writer, and a critic. As an historian he keeps his generation in touch, as it were, with both the past and the future; as a prophet he provides matter for meditation; as an artist he treats the whole (1) range of human emotions and treats the raw materials of life in a refined but grandiose way; as a writer he shows forth to the world the felicities and enchantments of the English language; and in his criticism he observes the precepts of Arnold "that before anything becomes literature, it must observe two conditions—it must be worth saying, and it must be worthily written."

### CRITICISM OF AUSTRALIAN PROSE.

The criticism of Australian prose covers a wide field of activity and as most people are prose readers, or figure in the prose sphere some way or other, a criticism of Australian prose should provide an immediate appeal. It is necessary to state that all good prose must be beautiful, that the words (2) or phrases used express ideas as well as create the atmosphere in which the ideas are conveyed. The prose need not be actuated by didactic tendencies, as was the case with Holman Hunt; nor need it have for its mission the spread of the gospel of beauty and joy in life, as Morris insisted; nor should it be the bond slave of a narrow utilitarian social code. Prose must be interesting; it should be useful; it must supply something to think of and ponder on; its rhythm must steal upon the senses without detection. If the prose represents the writing of a novel, then as the novel is a main vehicle of literary expression, it should express for people a definite attitude towards the great problems of life and destiny.

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(1) Vision and Design. (Roger Fry).

(2) The Art of Reading. (A. R. Orage).

For Saint-Beuve a book was the expression of an individual the fruit of his mind and personality. Professor Saintsbury held that the object of literature is delight; its soul is imagination and its body is style. In other words, only that work of art lives in which the author has located his soul. Therefore the object of education should be to stimulate the meditative powers and a good thoughtful book does this effectively, so that literature becomes part of the national tradition and history, constituting the nation's spiritual being. Again, few pleasures give greater or more lasting satisfaction than reading. The discussion of books with friends is one of the happiest forms of companionship. It should be possible to say with Henry Taft, speaking of a good book—"Repeated perusals do not stale its charm, nor dull its humour, nor diminish its influence."

The literary criticism which occupied Australia in the past was mostly concerned with European subjects and European authors, and was more or less addressed to an international audience. The literary criticism of Australia, like Canada in this respect, had little bearing on the problems of Australian literature, or on the attempt to raise the Australian aesthetic and intellectual standards. Since the days of Federation, and, in particular, in recent years, a decided change has taken place, and Australian authors are keen to develop their own criticism, to market their goods, to better their literature and to further their own aesthetic.

An American critic (1) insists that Australian writers live in isolation; "no school directs their activities, no strong literary magazine or critical journal helps their literary movements; economically the Australian author has a hard row to hoe, and most of the writers suffer from an inferiority complex." Whether this critic is correct or otherwise, should be gleaned from the contents of this chapter.

The criticism offered in these pages does not represent a comprehensive review, nor does it deal with all phases of literary prose: it treats of a small part of Australian literature—the part that the writer considers of some aesthetic importance.

The first prose work by an Australian was written by W. C. Wentworth when he published his work "Statistical, Historical and Political Description of New South Wales" about 1820. During the period of almost one hundred and thirty years that elapsed before the present date of 1949 is reached, prose works of all sorts were produced in Australia—some were of the sensational type, some dealt with historical matter, others again had a scientific trend, a few paid attention to biography,

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(1) *Australian Literature*. (C Hartley Grattan).

but the greatest number were works of interest dealing with character studies, historical events, or descriptions of the Australian environment. Prose writers were not confined to one particular part of Australia; each state had its representatives, but Victoria and New South Wales had the greatest number, and even to this day, opportunities for literary effort are greater and more certain in the Eastern States.

Something in the Australian air stimulates the art impulse whether in literature, art, drama or music. Mr. A. Adams when editor of the "Lone Hand," wrote—"We have no trouble in getting articles and verses up to and above world standards, but Australian fiction so far (1912) is not up to the editor's ideal." But, while this may be true, the Australian labours under the disadvantage that its students are without artistic traditions to mould them, and that little access is possible to the monuments wrought by the masters in architecture, art, and literature, in Europe, England, America and the East. Illustrations do not train the eye for proportion; from a drawing it is not possible to learn everything.

E. Morris Miller (1) (Australian Literature) begins his work by referring to the early poets of New South Wales and he arranges them in chronological order, but the poets were not alone in giving expression to the first literary efforts of Early Australia.

The records in the Mitchell Library, Sydney, indicate the early production of a newspaper—"The Sydney Gazette", first published in 1803. There is also mention made of a history by Collins dealing with the foundation of Australia; the Rev. Richard Johnson composed a report of his church work in the Australian Missionary field, but the first periodical to see the light of day was "The Australian Magazine" (1), which appeared on May 1st, 1821—was a compendium of religious, literary and miscellaneous intelligence. It gave reports on agriculture, the events of the time and a few columns of general information. The paper used was poor, the printing was never too satisfactory. The 13th number contained an announcement that the magazine would appear quarterly instead of monthly, due to the lack of mechanical facilities and poor talent. This magazine was the first Australian production where literary and critical matter found expression.

From this magazine to the advent of the first Australian prose writers is a period of nearly 50 years. Some of the first prose men found a reading public mainly abroad, since

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(1) Australian Literature, Vols. I and II. (E. Morris Miller. 1940).

(1) Aust. Hist. Records.

they wrote about what was strange and unusual, or on subjects that favoured the sensational element but made little aesthetic appeal.

"The Australasian" established in 1854, became the most important journal in Australia. The Colonial Monthly, The Melbourne Review, The Sydney Quarterly, The Centennial Magazine were other magazines that appeared at different times between 1860 and 1900, and the perusal of these magazines today testifies to their literary value and to the aesthetic they sought to establish.

"Geoffrey Hamlyn" (1859) was one of the first novels written which can be called Australian. (2) "The novel exhibited the charm of a dewy freshness; it described the pleasant scenes and the homely atmosphere of prosperous homes in the bush: it dealt with the heroic characters and the noble generous souls doing their work conscientiously and with enthusiasm and zest." Kingsley wrote his book at Langa Willi Station (S. Western Victoria) at a place where the climate was beautiful, the scenery lovely, where everything savoured of peace, rest, contentment and felicity. (1) It was the beauty of the whole book, according to Desmond Byrne, that made his work a classic in Australian Literature, "even though the Britisher who wrote it, is never heart and soul with the Australian". The novel (2) begins in England and nearly all of the characters return there after they have made their fortunes.

"The great (3) merit of the novel lies in its purpose to present the Arcadian charm of early pastoral life in Australia before the gold era, when flocks and herds roamed over unending tracks of country beyond the hindrances of governments. Even the difficulties that arose from blacks and convicts, fires, floods and droughts are never over-accentuated; they come in as part of the game of fortune with nature. The chief character seeks relief from the strain by gathering romance and culture around his homestead . . ."

"Robbery Under Arms", by "Rolf Boldrewood", found a ready reading public, and the author said that he made £10,000 from the book in his time. The story is a well told one, but, as a novel, it appeals more to the enthusiasm of youth than to the aestheticism of maturity. "For the Term of His Natural Life" enjoyed a world-wide reputation—due doubtless to the contents of the book, since it supplied matter easy to read, material abounding in interest and descriptions of a penal system that

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(1) Australian Writers. (Desmond Byrne).

(2) Australian Literature. (C. Hartley Grattan)

(3) Australian Literature. (E. Morris Miller).

was a blot on civilisation. The novel was a work of power, of vivid pictures, of official brutality, and of gross tyrannical injustice, describing the suffering of miserable outcasts beyond the pale of human rights. This novel by Marcus Clarke brought Australia before the eyes of the world according to some authorities, but others regarded it as a work that did, and still does considerable injury to the cause of the fair land of the South. In 1929, C. Hartley Grattan wrote that it was a credit to any literature and was certainly one of the most gripping books that Australia gave to the world.

Clarke gave his story the realistic touch, and if the great novels of all lands have been written by realists, it must follow that the development of a really national literature under the Southern Cross must be achieved by Australians who are realists. Balzac, Dickens, Thackeray, Flaubert, Targenez, Tolstoy, Ibsen, Zola and Dostoevsky were all realists and they used the tongue of realism to set right what they considered wrong, or to bring the call of their country into the consciousness of the rest of the world. Marcus Clarke was a realist, so were Rolf Boldrewood and H. H. Richardson, and their works still impress the world, while others pass away because they concerned themselves only with the ephemeral parts of human experience, not with its lasting essentials.

Meredith is said to have given the novel a psychological subtlety, Tolstoy gave it a social philosophy, Hardy a touch of the mystic, but the Australian novelists, particularly Marcus Clarke, Rolf Boldrewood, Dowell O'Reilly (*Tears and Triumphs*) and others, the romantic realistic attraction, or they sought to blend scientific facts or narratives of experience, or themes of Colonial life with a leaven of imagination.

Many (1) of the early Australian writers by their courage in tackling problems, and their skill in elucidating them on the literary field, paved the way and minimised the difficulties of those who followed. Thus Marcus Clarke, Rolf Boldrewood, Ada Cambridge, Louis Becke, Thomas McCombie, John Lang, William Howitt, Mrs. Campbell Praed, Caroline Louisa Atkinson and others deserve great credit for being the first to blaze the track; it is never difficult to write on a subject, if some one has already prepared most of the materials.

One of the best novels—declared by competent critics to be a classic, in Australian literature is "Such is Life" by Joseph Furphy. "Such is Life" (2) is a novel based on a theory of the novel; not only has it a definite and deliberate structure,

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(1) Australian Literature. (C. Hartley Grattan).

(2) Meanjin Papers, No. 3. 1945. (A. D. Hope).

but the structure is determined rigorously by Furphy's philosophy of life, which he sets out to present and illustrate. Collins is really attacking the conventional idea of the plot altogether. Furphy puts forward an entirely new theory of the relation of literature to life, and announces a revolution in the nature of prose fiction—he would seem to say that a book must be a good book for the world, not good for a particular country or district.

"Such is Life" (1) was full of the author's characteristic philosophy—the brotherhood of man—illusiveness was one of his qualities, while his descriptions of character were remarkable. In his poems Joseph Furphy, like Burns, protested against the cant in politics and religion, but his book "Such is Life", and the same can be said of his second book "Rigby's Romance", are distinguished by their intellectual quality, humour, content and spirituality. Colin Roderick regards him as the Australian Chaucer, looking with understanding and heart upon the pageant of life, as it goes by.

Many of our early prose writers stood high in the opinion of their contemporaries e.g. T. A. Browne (Rolf Boldrewood) speaking of four wrote: "As long as Australians forget not the language of their forefathers; as long as Milton and Shakespeare are among the echoes of a bygone glorious day; so long will the memory of Kingsley, Clarke, Gordon and Brunton Stephens be left green amid Australian wastes and wolds." In 1949 the works of these four writers still rank high. Colonial literature as it was known up to Federation Days was young, the feeble offspring of English literature. At first it made many awkward attempts to stand and run alone, many and frequent falls resulted. Some wrote with a finger on the public pulse. To be highly successful as a novelist, it may be necessary to keep the audience in view while writing, but it can be safely said that no great literature ever comes into the world by such a road. It is making the craft of letters a trade instead of an art.

There were several writers like Mrs. Meredith who wrote charming sketches of country life in Tasmania, or Mrs. Campbell Praed, who mastered the pastoral life and described the difficulties of settlement, or the interesting features associated with foundations in outback parts of the continent. Some of the writers, like Ada Cambridge, a writer of power, really wrote for an English public, and she, like a few others, remained an English writer, even though she resided in Australia. Expatriates, however, find it difficult to deal vividly and vigorously

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(1) The Australian Novel. (Colin Roderick).



with the life of the country they leave. The colours soon pale, the pictures of character and national setting become less accurate and less intimate while the material used and the spirit animating them savour slightly of the spirit of the adopted land.

In the Australian libraries are found many books, some represent great books of the world—*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*—but books written in Australia and by Australians can be perused in the shelves of the bigger libraries of the capitals, or in the Mitchell Library, Sydney, or in the National Library, Canberra. Books differ in value, depth, and popularity, as much as diamonds differ from sand on the sea shore. Many Australian prose works were crude—a number were unable to bear the fierce critical light which usually beats upon a literary throne, but many possessed a pleasing presentation, evidently believing that it is the presentation that makes the thing literature. Many books gave aesthetic pleasure, since the contents were in themselves such as to engage the interest of a cultured mind and spirit.

Many Australian writers are already forgotten; a few flourished for a generation or two, and then sank into oblivion. In old magazines, periodicals and papers their works may yet be read, but to the great mass of Australians the names are not even known. At the meetings of the Australian Literature Society attempts are made to keep the names of the past Australian writers alive. The newly formed Australian Literary Commemorative Association led by Miss Kate Baker, O.B.E., proposes to keep before the public the names, works and lives of all Australia's past literary men. Dr. Lang, the versatile Sydney authority, on one occasion said: "The pioneers of a country, or of a great undertaking, are like the foundations of a great city—soon built over and forgotten."

### THE AUSTRALIAN NOVEL.

The general characteristics of Australian novels according to Professor Cowling (1) "were their candid unsentimentalism, their striving for truth, their tendency to develop conversational tone." The readers for the most part prefer fiction that makes life noble, people that are interesting, events that are unexpected, and a love element that eventually triumphs. The same authority maintained that "an Australian style was emerging—one clear as the crystal air, reflecting the sunlight and the Australian scenery. The Australian literature has been caught up in the strong current of the national life, and as

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(1) Address to the Australian Literary Society (Melb.).

time advances will tend to become more Australian in colour and atmosphere." Cowling terms Edmund Finn the Lamb of Australia, Dr. Fitchett, the Macaulay, Daniel Deniehy the greatest critic, and Walter Murdoch the master of that rare avis in our literature—the light essay.

The novel must be written in good language, clear, strong, vital, in good style. The music of style is an essential condition of its spiritual influence. A good novelist is in the first place a man who knows some of life's secrets and knows how to produce naturally a verbal music. "In (1) the opening pages of your work, the melody must not falter." The reader must be carried away without shock or friction . . . Let the music of style help the reader over the early stage of the journey. Sing well to seduce the heart you hope to conquer." The language of the novel must be healthy, peculiarities of language and construction, should be avoided, the only thing that matters is the presence of that ineffable music which is the song of the soul.

If ever an Australian school of literature arises, it will not be due to the fauna and flora of the Commonwealth or the geology and topography of the continent, but to the Australian atmosphere, the national life, the occupations, the religious and moral ideas, which will have inevitably and unconsciously created in our eyes and hearts and intellects, some difference in our ways of regarding things, betraying a peculiar way in which an Australian school contemplates life and nature.

To Henry Lawson, Louis Becke, A. H. Davis, E. J. Brady, Ethel Turner, Miss Mary Gaunt, Mrs. Aeneas Gunn, and others, "The Sydney Bulletin" was the nursing mother; the same authority also educated its readers and established itself as the chief literary and dramatic paper in Australia. Ada Cambridge alluded to before, wrote 20 novels, but "A Marked Man" was perhaps her best. Miss C. H. Spence wrote "Clara Morrison"—a story of the gold fever of 1851. Mary Gaunt raised the short story to an artistic level when she wrote "Moving Finger," but Henry Lawson specialised in the short story sphere. "While the Billy Boils" (1896) is perhaps Lawson's most important book, but it is really a series of short sketches rather than stories. The characters include all of the types found in the bush and Lawson makes them live. His knowledge of humanity made him disown anything that savoured of a manufactured personality.

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(1) In Defence of Letters. (C. Duhamel, Page 205).

The development of the novel under Federation has been most marked, and a great number of writers appear on the scene. The anti-dumping question appeared to be settled, and not once did it happen in Australia under Federation that 600,000 books of poor quality and questionable matter were considered worth-while for an Australian reading public. Books like "She Dresses for Dinner" (Georgia Rivers), "Land-takers" (Brian Penton), "The Tramp" (Dal Stevens), "Murder in Sydney" (Leonard Mann), "All That Swagger" (Miles Franklin), "Foveaux" (Kyle Tennant), a social document, a study of one of the poorer quarters of Sydney, were a few of the many books that appeared between the years 1900-1948. "All that Swagger" (1), according to C. Hartley Grattan was  $\frac{1}{4}$  good, but the final quarter was an aesthetic failure. Katherine Pritchard, with her three novels—"The Pioneers", "Black Opal" and "Working Bullocks" is an outstanding novelist and regarded as one of Australia's best.

The writers just alluded to present to the public different types of novel, one deals with character-study, another with psychology, another with historical matter, or social philosophy, religious thought, economic strictures and the varied phases of life.

The novelists mentioned in this section are selected at random. Dowell O'Reilly in his "Tears and Triumphs", pleases his readers with a work of unusual interest, Tarlton Rayment with his "Valley of the Sky", secured the prize open to competitors of the British Empire; Ada Cambridge an earlier novelist and the writer of more than 20 novels, greatly impressed W. G. Turner with her ability and he maintained that "A Masked Man", was the best book produced in Australia. "We of the Never-Never" (1907) by Mrs. Aeneas Gunn is really a classic, according to C. Hartley Grattan.

Some writers were responsible for expressing the finer virtues of a literary work making its art and contents richer and rarer. In the short one hundred and thirty years of Australia's literary life, twenty novels have appeared that compare with the best written anywhere, and can be styled great books. Miles Franklin believes some Australian novels are fitted to become world classics. Colin Roderick in his book (2) deals with nineteen novelists and gives excerpts from their works. Henry Kingsley, Marcus Clarke, T. A. Browne, Ada Cambridge, Arthur H. Davis (Steele Rudd), Joseph Furphy (Tom Collins), etc., are dealt with in turn. He says that Kingsley's "Geoffrey

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(1) Australian Literature. (C. H. Grattan).

(2) The Australian Novel (1945).

Hamlyn", and "Such is Life", by Joseph Furphy are looked upon as Australian classics, while Marcus Clarke and T. A. Browne (Rolf Boldrewood) wrote books that have become world famous. Later writers like Katharine Susannah Pritchard, "Brent of Bin Bin", Martin Boyd, Henry Handel Richardson, M. Barnard Eldershaw, Frank Dalby Davison, Brian Penton and Eleanor Dark receive generous consideration in Roderick's work.

"Miles Franklin" according to A. G. Stephens was the first real Australian girl to get into book form an expression of herself, her comrades and her country. "Her book is a warm embodiment of Australian life, as tonic as bush air, as aromatic as bush trees and honest as bush sunlight." "All that Swagger" made her one of the premier novelists of the British World as well as securing for her the "Prior Memorial Prize."

Henry Handel Richardson—the pen name of the wife of Doctor J. E. Robertson—a professor in the University of London was perhaps one of Australia's greatest novelists. In "Maurice Guest" she wrote about the student world she had known; she interpreted her Melbourne School life in "The getting of Wisdom" (1908), but her great work—the trilogy, "The Fortunes of Richard Mahony" (1929) brought her fame and recognition. The genius of the author put the struggles of the early gold pioneering days on the literary map. In 1930, the Mahony Trilogy was published as a whole. "The facts in the book are arranged meticulously, the characters live and die naturally, the matter is arranged with skill, the whole shows the competent craftsman." The Mahony Trilogy has been considered a masterpiece; it is certainly a work that places the writer on a very elevated literary plane.

The book, "A House is Built," which caught the public taste, had two authors—two ladies (M. Barnard Eldershaw), Marjorie Barnard and Flora Eldershaw. "Up the country by Brent of Bin Bin (1928), is not only an interesting work, but it presents the question—who wrote it? No satisfactory answer has been given as yet to this interesting query.

In recent years the novel has made great progress. In 1933 23 Australian novels were published. The best writers cultivated a cosmopolitan spirit rather than a nationalistic one, and they appeared to put order, sense and logic, into what would otherwise remain mere bits and scraps, odds and ends of knowledge—turning the whole story into a sort of social history. Notwithstanding the progress noted above, it is generally agreed that the ideal novel has not yet been achieved by an Aust-

ralian, nor has any great heroine up to this appeared. In literature and art, it is not possible to single out Australian women as a distinct type, yet temperamentally, she differs distinctly from the women of Great Britain and America. The women novelists in Australia have been numerous, and some like Ada Cambridge, Miles Franklin, H. H. Richardson are ranked high among the world's best.

Women hold a prominent place in the creation of Australian Letters. Dorothea Mackellar, Zora Cross, Mary Gilmore, Eleanor Dark, Marjorie Barnard, Dorothy Cottrell, Flora Eldershaw, Miles Franklin, Mary Gaunt, Nettie Palmer, Louise Mack, Ethel Turner, Alice Rosman, Dora Wilcox, Constance Mackaness, Mary Simpson, Mrs. Aeneas Gunn, are but a few of the names that figure on the prose list; while the women writers of verse are numerous and of consequence, e.g., Enid Derham, Marie Pitt, Winifred Shaw, Elsie Cole, Mary Fullerton and scores of others.

Competent critics have complained of lack of humour, lag in the action, profuseness of expression, absence of spiritual features, a receptive attitude to scholarship rather than a critical one, as weaknesses in the Australian novel, and while it is possible that in the main these weaknesses are present, still they are only minor considerations. The verdict of whether a novel will survive is rather arrived at by the study of four questions. Is the story interesting, what does it teach, what is its aesthetic value, will it be re-read and survive?

Prose to be good is written with style, and every great book is a picture gallery for the public to admire, imitate and emulate. Through the magic of artistic words and phrases, and passages of prose or verse, books evoke a potent influence over the mind. By means of style (1) the great masters worked their way into the hearts of the readers, but as magic seldom travels the same road twice, new spells and incantations are constantly needed. The style is the thing, but content is essential too. The work, if lyrical in spirit, and richly endowed with a novelist's insight into character and emotion, helps to haunt the imagination with phrases and can never be expelled, it sets up before the mind's eye, images of such power and beauty, that the soul can never forget them. When the work is illuminated by flashes of exquisite beauty, varied by darts of critical but kindly humour, the result is perfection. True (2) reading is certainly one of the main pathways to taste, to appreciation: and taste needs as much education as art or music.

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(1) The Poetry and Philosophy of George Meredith. (G. M. Trevelyan).

(2) Literary Crafts and Appreciation. (R. Fuller).

One writer captivates the reader by the simplicity of his style; another succeeds with his selection of beautiful words and phrases; a third writer pleases with his use of the prose of every day life. If a writer gives the impression of a heavy pedestrian tread, or uses a style like Bacon's that is too philosophical or one that is too superficial, with no substance beneath, then it is safe to assume that he will not be willingly read. Lamb's "footstep—as light as a descending feather", has made him popular as a writer even to this day, but few follow Addison's style now; only occasional aesthetes imitate Newman's masterly method, or even Trollope's newsy way with his quaint repetition.

The Australian style aims at supplying matter rather than holding the reader's attention a moment to enable him to say how beautiful this passage is! What a wonderful description, what a magnificent paragraph of English! "The prose (1) must present to the reader a full picture of life; there must be apparent the element of truth, a touch of inspiration and an amount of energy, all displaying themselves in just proportion."

"The Timeless Land", by Eleanor Dark is a novel written in recent years and a short criticism of it may not be out of place. The story of the book fails to impress the reader, and the writer's style becomes somewhat trying; the descriptions of places are all too lavish thus placing emphasis on the artistic rather than on the practical side of the story—this weakness is shared by too many novelists. "The Timeless Land" seems to the critic to be somewhat indefinite in aim, often unsettled in matter, difficult to decide whether it is a novel or an historical report. The problems raised are somewhat futile, the passions analysed are superficial, and some of the subsidiary matter is of little significance.

Characters like Governor Phillip move through the chapters like mere shadows; Bennilong, the aborigine is the hero, and the story is more or less his reactions to the arrival of the first fleet. The convicts and their doings occupy a fair portion of the book, but perhaps in this part the author in trying to be too realistic, defeats her purpose. The story indicates a moral without doubt, but is misses its objective in the wealth of Australian artistry the story supplies. The authoress fails to give full rein to her characters; she accompanies them perhaps too closely throughout the story. The book is a big one; it cannot be read in a hurry; some of the dramatis personae in the book are either too feeble to be placed, or too brazenly painted to be real, and the book, as a

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(1) Foundations of English Prose. (A. C. Ward).

novel, can hardly be expected to keep its reader awake, until the small hours of the morning.

The "Timeless Land" has been prescribed as one of the books to be read by students preparing for a test in Matriculation literature, but it would seem to the critic that while the book has some historic value, its aesthetic appeal is far from being its main attraction.

In addition to the few novelists and writers mentioned in these pages there is a whole range of novels depending on the fairy story, the novel of adventure, the one that has an historical base, the prophetic one—following the model of Wells, or the pseudo-scientific one after the style of Jules Verne—they are all descendants of the old romance novel, but for an enlarged circle of readers and for economic success the realistic novel outclasses all others, since it deals so fully with the wonderful material which forms the texture of our daily life and the influence of environment.

The value of great books as pillars of true living is readily conceded. "Literature (1) like a magic carpet transports us from the shabby attic to the King's palace; for a gloomy cloud-laden sky they substitute the smiling heavens—books secure for us immortal friends. Literature supplies aesthetic joys that make life fuller and richer and every one who has learned the art of arts—ars vivendi—has taken joy in great literature."

### THE SHORT STORY.

The short story is a feature of Australian prose. One critic has called short stories the submarines and light craft of the literary navy. It is possible that the Sydney Bulletin was responsible for their marked appearance in Australian literature, for that paper encouraged writers to send to them for publication "short stories, crisp and racy, pungent and virile ones—stories that would make an instant appeal to a reader." Most of the short stories of the past have dealt with country life rather than with life in the city, even though two thirds of the people lived in the larger cities. Some of the short stories defeated their purpose by over-shooting the mark, while others again failed, because of their lack of reality and truth. The short story may be a picture, a portrait or a subject work. The characters must not become subordinated to the subject, nor is a character fully formed from the moment of its conception. Short stories suit magazines and newspapers, and are always useful companions when travelling.

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(1) The Letter and the Spirit. (M. E. Deutsch).

Australians for the most part travel long journeys at frequent intervals hence the popularity of the short story, but it must not be admitted that Australians, as a people, are unduly attached to the importance of the short story—they like it, often as a pill but not as a daily food.

The chief Australian short story writers were Henry Lawson, who excelled in this particular branch, Edward Dyson, Richard Burnie, Gavin S. Casey, Margaret Trist, Dal Stevens, Myra Morris, Douglas Stewart and others—Some of these are the principal writers of 1949.

Clayton Hamilton wrote: "The aim of the short story is to produce a single narrative with the greatest economy of means consistent with the utmost emphasis"—thus its writer reduces the story to the level of journalism. The bulk of American magazines contained stories of the journalistic touch—they were not guided by art, but by commercial ideas, while a surprise ending—the hall-mark of a short story, was always the outcome. Now, if the story is an art-form, then soul as well as technique is necessary. Professor Oliphant felt that Australian writers should follow the style and method of English writers rather than those of America. Another critic (1) speaking of the short story said: "I believe that the short story, which is in such favour today in nearly all the papers, is a sterile art, and likely to be fatal to the creative spirit: sterile because it does not stimulate or impregnate the writer's talents while he is actually writing." It is also difficult to believe that the "Short Story" is a high tribute to the aesthetic of a country; its aim is more to stir one's interest and satisfy a desire for the sensational element in a reader, whereas an aesthetic ideal would seem to be something on a higher plane.

### JOURNALISM.

The prose section includes what the newspaper and magazines have contributed to Australian letters, and it has been Australia's good fortune to possess newspapers and a few magazines that stand for culture and literary prestige.

As journalism is mainly concerned with what is ephemeral, or with what has a superficial striking peculiarity, differing in this respect from literature, which insists on the inter-relations of human character and environment. Journalism and literature are not synonymous. A leading article has not any value the day after publication, while literature is an art. The journalist may be the schoolmaster of the adult world, but literature is matter for the master as well as for the world.

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(1) In Defence of Letters. (G Duhamel).



Good journalism should be what the French call "A Causerie"—it should not be too formal, nor always too finely dressed; it should have something of the ease and spontaneity of the living voice. Good journalism represents the aesthetic of a people, since it gives a convincing suggestion that the aesthetic must be of no mean level, when the journalistic work is of such exceptional merit.

### AUSTRALIAN HISTORY.

One of the first books written of Australia was a history—"A Statistical, Historical and Political Description of the Colony of New South Wales." The book published in England saw the light of day in 1819 and quickly passed through three editions by 1824, so keen was the English public to learn particulars about the great Southern Land. The book described in its chapters the Australian black—their customs, ways, culture, religion, etc. The account of the black man was something new; their existence supplied interesting reading matter for the curious; their depravity stirred the zeal of the missionaries; in a few cases plans were made, and a campaign set on foot to set up schools for their civilisation and instruction.

W. C. Wentworth's work, already alluded to, was also a history. The Rev. J. D. Lang in 1834 published in London an Historical and Statistical Account of New South Wales, (3rd Edit., 1852). The History of New South Wales (T. H. Brain) was published in 1846. West's History of Tasmania in 1852 and then a work "The History of Australian Discovery and Colonisation" by Samuel Bennett published in 1867 proved to be a valuable contribution to prose.

Major Mitchell in his usual methodical manner gave full particulars of his journeys and discoveries. Jose, the historian, asserts that the books of Mitchell are the only journals by an Australian explorer worth considering from a literary point of view. His plates, maps, and sketches, exhibit his ability as an artist and draftsman; his travel books are filled with notes on the flora and fauna of the country through which he passed; he showed a field-naturalist's practical knowledge of geology and botany. One of his papers, "An Account of the Limestone Caves at Wellington Valley" was read before the Geological Society of London, April 13th, 1831.

Histories by McCombie, Bonwick, Rusden, Turner, Finnis were published at different times between 1850 and 1900. The histories of all the colonies found writers, with the result that a bibliography of Australian historians makes a surprisingly long list.

The first histories were informative—some dealt wholly with political aspects; others had a semi-political theme, most were narratives, descriptions of the things that happened. Early discoverers wrote particulars of the journeys they made, or gave descriptions of their wanderings and travels, e.g., (1) Captain Geo. Grey, who wrote "Journals of Discovery in Australia", and Edward J. Eyre, who wrote a journal of the "Expedition of Discovery"—both wonderful stories of human endurance and determination.

From 1900 onwards the presence of five or six historians of a superior outlook may be noted in the story of Australian history. These writers were Cardinal Moran, A. W. Jose, James Battye, Ernest Scott, Professor Wood, Geo. Mackaness, Flora Eldershaw, and Professor R. Crawford, all of these were historical writers of note, all belonged to the inner circle of the antiquarians, all were keen workers and pioneers in the fields of historical research. Histories written since Federation Days appear to be less narrow and one-sided, less partial to mere opinion, but decidedly inclined to be accurate and more careful to ascertain the truth.

Accurate history enables the careful reader to note with interest the style of the writer, the matter dealt with, the criticism offered, the philosophy underlying the progress of events alluded to, and the whole movements that dominated the inhabitants of the country. Considered as literary material, Australian history is not yet satisfactory. Its brevity i.e. its 150 years of political existence, deprives it of the long vistas that some writers enjoy. It is not possible yet to compare one century with another, or even in a conclusive way a past age with a present one. Flora Eldershaw (2) says the real interest of Australian History lies not in spectacular deeds, but in social experiments and mass progress. No violent divisions have yet worried its history, no bitter wrongs to be righted keep its history alive, no lost provinces to brood upon serve to make its people patriotic.

History is a section of Australian prose that still needs further development, but already the histories of education in each State have been published; works dealing with the history of economics are welcomed each year, while the stories of districts, the foundation of towns, societies, movements, etc., are appearing yearly and these histories together with the keenness for biography indicate the trend of the Australian taste and the quality of its aesthetic.

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(1) R.A.H. Journal, Vol. 25

(2) R.A. History Journal, Vol. XX. (1934).

## ESSAYS.

In essays Australian literature is even weaker than in drama perhaps due to the fact, that there is little leisure for the research that an essay requires, while the market for such effort is unsatisfactory. D. H. Deniehy and Marcus Clarke were, perhaps, among the first to write essays in Victoria, while A. G. Stephens, the writer of the Red Page (*The Bulletin*), Alan Mickle, A. W. Jose, Adrian Lawler, the writer of the essay *Arquebus*, Dr. Priestly, Richard Burnie, Walter Murdoch and several others, now less known, were among the chief contributors to essay work. Burnie and Murdoch in their productions savour of the literary flavour; their paragraphs are full of literary allusions and quaint terms. Essays provide facilities to writers to express their views, to teach others something about man, a little about themselves, and much about ideas; thus making life interesting to readers. Great writers are like searchlights that pick out significant aspects of human life, and set them forth in clear view.

An essay according to Professor Cowling (1) implied originally a weighing, or an estimate of an abstract idea, or of a problem, but the meaning had been extended to include both a contribution to a magazine, which is neither a sketch nor a story. "The genuine literary essay is a rambling discursive communication of thoughts which correspond very closely to reflective poetry; in fact, when thrilled by emotion, or gilded by fancy, it is often poetry, though not verse, and it might be called prose poetry or lyrical prose."

Essay writers like D. H. Deniehy, W. B. Dalley, Archibald Strong, and from 1930, Walter Murdoch, "Furnley Maurice", Mary Gilmore, made a brave attempt to prove that Australia was able to exhibit the cultural finesse of Europe. W. B. Dalley maintained that if all writers worked for the common good, the country would attain its destiny and stand out prominently in the world of letters.

Mr. P. Serle in an address to the Australian Literature Society September 18th, 1933, said that Walter Murdoch wrote with wisdom, humour, and honesty, and was one of Australia's foremost essayists. A good essay (2) according to Murdoch is the best substitute that literature has to offer us for a good talk.

No literary journal, few literary reviews of any scope, standing, and influence, at present exist in Australia. One or two small ones—"Meanjin", in Melbourne, the "Southerly" in Sydney, and perhaps one or two others elsewhere help to provide

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(1) Address to the Australian Literature Society, July 16th, 1934.

(2) *Saturday Mornings*. (W. Murdoch).

spiritual food for the body of critical readers but it is hoped that one like "The Australian National Review", may come into vogue again.

### BIOGRAPHY.

Australian literature is not yet rich in biography. Most of what has been written deals with politicians, and even in such cases the lives and works of the statesmen that have appeared from time to time, should be regarded as chronicles or records of a busy life rather than portraits of the individual as he lived.

Biography requires little creative work, but a deep insight into character, ability to observe, the gift of vision to divine the future, a sense of balance to award judicial appraisal and skill as a craftsman to entertain the reader. Some of the biographies written in Australia have failed to impress critics, since they have been merely graceful and sympathetic sketches, with more sauce than substance, rather than a full and accurate analysis of the person whose life was dealt with. To do justice to his work "a biographer should choose his subject as a dandy chooses his suit. (1) Tone and cut are as essential as texture; the right length is as essential as the right fit, continuity of interest and totality of impression are likewise necessary". Biography should edify, and what edifies is not the full drawn physical picture of man, but an exposition of the principles by which he acted.

The biographies found in the libraries deal with the lives of a few scientists, several schoolmasters, some ecclesiastics, occasional sportsmen and businessmen, but few men of letters have risen to a stature, which entitles them to a first rate biographical study. If biography after Saint Beuve's time became a common feature of the French literary landscape, there is reason to hope that the same will happen in Australia, for there are a great number of men and women, whose worth and work deserve to be chronicled, as an object lesson to fellow-citizens. A well-written biography also gives a writer the opportunity for illustrating what is meant by beauty in literature, what is an ideal expression of life's philosophy, what is noblest in fine art; such a composition gives to all readers the greatest aesthetic pleasure. The finer the virtues of a literary work, the richer and rarer its art and its content—the keener is the aesthetic vision required for its full appreciation.

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(1) Foundations of English Prose. (A. C. Ward).

**THE DRAMA.**

During the past century the achievement in Australian dramatic literature has been poor. H. M. Green (1) remarks "On the dramatic side Australian literature is worse than weak." There may have been activity in the Australian theatre from 1850-1900, but very few Australian productions were good enough to have them represented on the stage. Difficulties of production, lack of suitable themes, the preponderance of English plays hindered the development of any local talent. The first (2) recorded publication of a printed play in Australia was the prose-drama entitled "The Bandit of the Rhine" (1835), while the first Australian book of dramas in verse was the work of David Burn—one of the most cultured of the early Tasmanian writers. His book of dramas was published in 1842. Until the 19th century Australian drama represented merely a series of names and titles. Haddon Chambers, (1860-1921) who wrote a great number of plays occupied for many years the supreme place among Australian playwrights. Louis Esson was also an Australian playwright, who achieved literary distinction for dramas (1912).

Esson was very successful with short plays, and the best of these was his play—"Dead Timber". Other playwrights were Arthur Henry Adams, E. J. Rupert Atkinson, Vance Palmer, W. J. Turner, Jack Lindsay, Helen Simpson, Edward Vidler, Eric Bedford and Henrietta Drake-Brockman. Most of these figured in the dramatic section from 1912 up to 1938, but as already indicated the work of Australian dramatists has not been remarkable. As the century advances, the matter will become of wider interest and of greater importance.

With prose so well advanced and with possibilities so pronounced the Australian aesthetic is thus seen to be of a high qualitative value; it makes a wide appeal to the cultured mind; its writers aim at producing work that will play a great part in the intellectual life of the world.

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(2) Australian Literature, Vol. I. (E. Morris Miller).

(1) Outline of Australian Literature. (H. M. Green).

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN.

### CRITICISM OF AUSTRALIAN ART.

#### INTRODUCTION.

It might be mentioned to begin with that criticism has no dogmatic value except for pedants; accepted as a body of principles it solves nothing; taken as a mental process it stimulates the mind and sets itself on the way to find a solution for its problems. A work of art is utterly dead the moment the artist lifts his hand from it. A picture is useless if no eye sees it; a poem lacks beauty when the reader is absent; the sweetest harmonies in music are wasted if they fall on deaf ears; an eloquent address in a strange language is valueless if no one is able to interpret its message.

In the Middle Ages the predominance of Architectural conceptions and methods stood out noticeably. In succeeding centuries the characteristic art expression was painting. The 18th century was marked by the development of literature; the 19th century seemed to favour music, while the 20th century—the present time, appears to be partial to music, literature and art. Every expressive art, viewed as a whole, and every artistic medium exemplifies a definite tendency to evolve from the concrete and immediately sensuous, to the more abstract, and what for the lack of a better word is called by some a metaphysical conception.

Art in Australia progressing from the concrete stage to the present form, has progressed through several phases; it began with the Colonial period; it passed through the formative era; it developed the impressionistic stage under Roberts, Streeton, and others; it has outlived some of the modern movements—post-impressionist, sur-realism, neo-surrealism, etc., and the present state seems to be a resurgence of realism. Today the question is where is contemporary art going? It would seem that the tradition embodied in the works of men like Ruskin, Morris, Wright, Gropius and Mumford, which insists on the democratic functional and collective nature of art is being followed—the artists recognise the social crisis maturing in their time, and hence a re-orientation of values has occurred—a reaction from aestheticism and abstract art, as well as an opposition to the theories of the obscurantists, futurists constructionists, etc., with a tendency towards the development of present day realism.

The opinion of the educated "tends to a common focus", the indiscriminating public cannot be considered the final judge,

yet the modern man, partly due to better educational facilities, the presence of the art schools, and the conscious use of improved art forms by all sorts of social and business enterprises, has become more aware of art than were former generations. Public patronage, too, has helped the development of art in Australia, while the generosity of many individuals, and the liberal donations of private benefactors to art galleries, the bequests and liberal prizes awarded annually, have helped the artists materially, and encouraged them to attain to the best possible in their work.

Miss Adelaide Ironside, as early as 1853, was offered £200 a year by the N.S.W. Government to help her in her artistic work, but she refused to accept the offer. Two of her pictures she painted were sold at satisfactory prices; W. C. Wentworth bought one for £500.

It will not be admitted that all the paintings produced in Australia immediately met with public approval, or that there was a ready response by the critics to proclaim the praises of the artist. Some paintings were provocative; some even were responsible for a "newspaper-war"; some again, when hung in the Art Gallery, attracted the attention of many thousands of art lovers and aesthetes.

The development of art in a country provides a truer gauge of its national growth in culture than does its literature. Art (1) represents the intellectual, the emotional, and the spiritual wealth of human ideas presented in forms of symmetry, attractiveness and beauty. Its object is to give nature's beauty its most truthful expression, and its most (2) effective art is that which unites the greatest possible diversity of interests in the most unified, restful synthesis. Such art has power to stir the imagination, while it appeases the senses, but it should be remembered that in art, there is always some power of the mind to which it is difficult to give an exact name. Art (3) has been called the most direct language of the soul, the means by which man completely unifies his emotional and intellectual life, so that his feelings as well as his thoughts can be transmitted to others.

### AUSTRALIAN ART.

In this criticism of Australian Art, it will suffice to mention instances in which art has failed to reach a satisfactory standard, or to note where it has deviated from traditional forms, or to add recommendations that would still further its development. Most of the early painting done in Australia was unsatis-

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(1) Art and Scholasticism. (J. Maritain).

(2) The Arts and Man. (R. S. Stites).

(3) The Hindu View of Art. (Mulk Raj Anand).

factory because the painters, as has been said elsewhere, sought to find what did not exist; they failed to see the beauty that did exist; they were worried by the trees, the landscape, the light, the tone; the drawings may have been accurate, but the "gold and blue" of the Australian colour was missed. Again, the overseas (1) religious literary aesthetic and moral influences were too strong to enable painters to do justice to the Australian scene; too close a relationship to English thought and taste prevented a national tradition from evolving. For the first fifty years of the Colony art comment was completely neglected. Dr. John Lhotsky, a visiting Polish scientist in 1839 was really the first to make a critical statement about Australian Art.

(2) Artists, according to Bernard Smith, as a distinct group in the Australian community, came into existence during the eighties. Before that date there was no real criticism of art; fulsome praise rather than critical analysis was the accepted order of the day. Too great an appreciation of the common place, too much self-satisfaction in whatever was tried, resulted in a general decline in intellectual and aesthetic values. Even before the time of Tom Roberts criticism could not be considered informed, just, or educative; the touch of commercial aggrandisement too frequently obtruded itself, but artistic criticism made its presence felt at a later period, and such criticism was historic, systematic, re-creative and evaluative.

Lalo asserted that when a work of art is apprehended and appraised by a public it crosses the aesthetic threshold. Social sanction confers authority upon that which without it would remain in the category of natural facts, but unless the artist is encouraged by the public—encouraged and appreciated in a way that brings economic advantages, he soon fails. Although (3) absolute disinterestedness remains the ideal of art and professions in the past were proudly named liberal, because they escaped from the servile taint of mammon worship, yet an artist has to provide for his own economic welfare, and if his intention is good, he may even desire legitimately material progress. Purpose and result must be distinguished, and it is possible that best sellers can be free from mercenary guile.

Many Australian people unfortunately demand works of art that arouse sensation, hence their aesthetic is of the realistic type. They insist that the artist should become one with the inward rhythm of things; that all novels, e.g., should illustrate realism; that emotionalism must be dynamic, supreme; art must be a direct perception of things; it must present reality, not

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(1) Place, Taste and Tradition. (B. Smith).

(2) Place, Taste and Tradition. (B. Smith).

(3) Art for Art's Sake. (Guerard).



ideals. Reliable authorities (1), however, hold that the most effective art unites the greatest possible diversity of interests, plus vigour of activity and production, and a wide tolerance of its principles.

In another chapter it has been said that Australia specialised in landscape painting and that some of the early painters found difficulty in adapting themselves to the atmosphere, colour and light of the great Southern land, but competent critics say that the Australian landscape painting has yet a long way to go even on the path of realism. Decoratively it is unique in opportunity among the world's landscape and it is by no means easy to depict. There is no one correct form of Australian landscape, just as there is no one correct form of art. When men look at nature aesthetically, they bring with their appreciation preconceptions of unity, variety and beauty, gained from other works of art, and that enables them to consider and make an estimate. Australian landscape requires a high tonal scheme, and the facts of colour, atmosphere, and light, need careful recording. Many (2) Australian landscape paintings are remarkably good, and yield aesthetic enjoyment to those whose catholic imagination and careful training have been sufficiently developed but no artist has made or will ever make the final statement about Australian landscape.

When art departs from traditional form, discussion is the result and the style of one period is contrasted with the style of another period. (3) At present in the world there is a bewildering number of styles of art existing side by side or horizontally, where in a previous age they succeeded one another vertically. As the social need changed, they merged into one another gradually and the contrast was less violently noticed than now. At present, the chaotic medley of styles causes anarchy and bewilderment, cubism, futurism, impressionism, expressionism, surrealism, etc.—all off-shoots of naturalism, each explores something different. Sensuous beauty once condemned as meretricious, has now altars; the advent of a new paganism has pushed aside Puritanism.

The comparison of styles and modes of art in a more general way illustrates the social tendencies and aspirations of any given time or group. It shows when the world is in disarray, when servants of the State are inefficient, when the profit-motive is foremost in men's minds, when spiritual standards are lost sight of and science, business and morality—the three idols of the modern world hold sway. To a certain degree the above criticism represents the development of art in Aust-

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(1) *The Arts and Man*. (R. S. Stites).

(2) *Place, Taste and Tradition*. (Bernard Smith).

(3) *Art for Art's Sake*. (A. Guerard).

ralia today, yet judging by the displays of art held in the principal cities, quality, vision, beauty, purpose and sympathy are the features that the critics maintain stand out pre-eminently. Art is sorely in need of a sound theoretical basis in order to handle satisfactorily the problem of value judgment. Objectivity for example, errs by supposing that all art can be ranked on a single scale, uniform for and discernible by all normal persons. Subjective art likewise errs by supposing there is no scale common to any two or more persons, while relativity teaches that almost any scale can be used for some purposes.

There is also a degree of confusion in art criticism, and in aesthetics caused by the several misuses of the words "art" and "beauty". The words subjectivism, objectivism, relativism, also seem subject to a variety of uses, and accordingly serious ambiguities are the result. There is also some confusion existing relative to aesthetics and morals, but the apparent contradiction occasionally visible between aesthetics and morals vanishes, when it is remembered that the intellect is limited to its own range, and contains bad elements as well as good. It follows that supreme works of intellect and aesthetic art, can emanate from men who are immoral, or who deny the existence of anything higher than reason, hence the creative artist may produce highly intellectualised work that is demoralising, or even actively vicious.

Works of art that are displayed from time to time, in some cases make an immediate appeal, but when the subject matter is unfamiliar, or the work submitted is complex, study is required to appreciate its value, and careful analysis is needed to do justice to its presentation. Clive Bell insists that the experience of an emotion of an exceptional kind—a sort of aesthetic ecstasy is noted the moment one confronts a work of art, but if such an emotional reaction of the aesthete be accepted as the criterion of value of an original work of art, we are led to the absurd conclusion that a great work of art is valueless, if it happens to be produced in a society, so poor in aesthetes, that no one reacts to it; and that a work of art has a high value, if aesthetic spectators care to see it on a day, when they are capable of a high degree of ecstasy, and of low value when their receptivity happens to be below the mark.

(1) R. H. Wilenski insisted that when an original work of art has been honestly and competently passed by the artist as right, it has for that reason an intrinsic value that can never be altered by any reactions on the part of spectators or critics, and that the value acquired by original works of art from the appreciation given by spectators, is a type of value to be distinguished from the work's intrinsic value.

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(1) The Modern Movement in Art. (R. H. Wilenski).

If original artists depended on the opinion of spectators, they would never continue to work. Spectators are often apathetic, derisive and even abusive. The basis of the aesthetic critics attitude on the point of values seems to be a belief that he can react to works of art when he sees them, and that his own reaction is the criterion of value of the work of art; or, in other words, that the artist does not know the value of his own work, and that it is valueless until the aesthetic critic has approved of it by means of some aesthetic ecstasy or thrill that he has experienced. The only critic capable of telling society authoritatively about a work of art is the man who has discovered the attitude, motives and procedure of the artist, and to make that discovery is the function of artistic criticism.

As the writer is incompetent to adjudicate authoritatively when works of art are under review, he favours Wilenski's idea, since he feels that what he says is true regarding literary values; it is very possible that such a view applies equally to artistic channels. Distinct hierarchies of the arts and valuations of works are discernible, varying in different countries and at different times of history and stages of civilisation, is in itself proof that standards of value shift and depend on outside factors. The social needs that arise determine the order of precedence of the arts, and such social needs arise from factors that may be geographical, climatic, racial, economic, political, or religious.

In a greater or lesser degree each art is anchored to its cultural and social back-ground, and cannot be completely separated from it except for the purpose of analysing its purely aesthetic element. If the social element were taken away from any of the arts, they at once cease to be what they are. The social function plays a part in portraiture, in arts, and crafts, in the pictures which record the artist's impressions; it shows the past and the future; art is the healer and educator of men.

In the Art Digest, December 1st, 1941, Royal Cortissoz of the Herald Tribune gave the Australians a thoughtful review dealing with the Australian art that was sent to New York for purposes of exhibition. The exhibit included paintings by Tom Roberts, G. W. Lambert, Hans Heysen, Elioth Gruner, John Glover, Conrad Martens and others. The review stated "Sophistication and aptitude characterise the school in its later periods. The Australians have forged ahead of modern European practice, mostly in a conservative mood, and though not many of them have developed a distinct style, their work has spontaneity and force. The school has indeed travelled far from the primitive topographical method to be observed, say in the Sydney of John Eyre dating from about 1809.

"The Australian artist would seem to have breathed the air of freedom and accordingly to have cultivated a certain

breadth in his work. The keynote is one declaring fidelity to the surface of the country, and the life going on within its borders. The Australian is on the whole a landscape rather than a figure painter, an impressionist rather than a picture builder, though there are several pieces which might seem to contradict this hypothesis." Cortiszez concluded by remarking that not the most ardent Australian could insist that the school has produced any great master, but it carries on in good faith.

Theodore Sizer (1) dealing with the same exhibition in his review on art from Australia says that "curiously enough the Australian, although living in the Eastern hemisphere, has hardly been touched by the great arts of adjacent oriental shores. Britain almost alone has been his cultural sponsor. Australia boasts that 98 per cent of its population is British."

The third section of the criticism of Australian Art deals with the recommendations that should be helpful to further the development of art in Australia.

In recent years in Australia there has been a decided effort to develop its art and to show that its people are cultured. A lasting and vital native art demands more than the creations of a few great men: it demands a general artistic (2) awareness, an understanding of contemporary life, an intelligent use of great tradition and the ability to give the stamp of the universal to what has been inspired by the particular. When art education becomes more general and art schools more numerous in the land, the people will appreciate better the advantages arising from establishing more firmly in the community an artistic sense.

Some Australians are untrained to feel the higher and more permanent pleasures of art, they grasp at any ephemeral work that offers an easy flattery of the lower elements of nature. Often, too, the latest production is considered the best, because it is the latest. Yet there are many who are very fastidious and view things with a certain bias based on either aesthetic, philosophical, or other considerations.

One good feature about Australian art is that the general public has become its patron, and its appreciation in the main is natural, spontaneous, genuine, and susceptible to unlimited growth and improvement. When a picture of unusual quality has been displayed in a picture gallery, or when an artist gives a "display" of his works, the patronage in many cases has been not only encouraging, but in some instances, magnificent.

Australia has yet to raise a race of collectors—those rare spirits whose enthusiasm and knowledge have enriched museums

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(1) Magazine of Art (1941) Washington.

(2) A Short History of Canadian Art. (Graham McInnes).

of art, and helped to maintain artistic standards, for the artist to work in freedom and produce his finest work.

The galleries are the centres of artistic inspiration, for they represent the accumulated wealth of the past. Interest in pictures since the Great War has been extraordinary, and some 5000 pictures are shown in Melbourne annually. Among the artists, who show their pictures are found the names of Wm. Dobell, Russell Drysdale, Eric Wilson, Joshua Smith, Thea Proctor, Douglas Watson, Norman Lindsay, Dalgarno and many others.

The question is asked what then has art in the course of time's river given to Australia? The answer is emphatically that it has enabled its people to take life out of the ordinary and common place, and to lift it into the unique and distinctive, and that it is the characteristic of the unique and distinctive to stand on its own merits, independent of and different from all things about it. Art (1), too, illustrates the fact that in spite of the present day agitated life with its changing moods, the love of nature and the soul of the people remain the same; poise, serenity and balance are sought as a reaction to the reign of speed and the restlessness that prevails everywhere.

Art is clearly a psychological necessity; it is not an economic need, yet for a high development it demands an economic surplus over and above the necessities of life; it also reflects a certain stage of culture. Art education although well developed in Australia, shows what has been accomplished is only a fraction of what can be done. Colleges of Fine Arts should be more numerous, providing for the people a training in the technique of painting, sculpture, architecture, music or drama. If schools like the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, where the project method is in vogue, or if lectures and gallery talks were given frequently as in some countries, aesthetic results would be more fruitful, and the blending of various forms of scholarship would enable the layman to see the ideal of beauty socially elevated.

The artist, it should be remembered, is not bound to use his art as a moralising force; the artist is not a preacher, but he furthers the cause of the good, inasmuch as he is helping to raise the standards of pleasure, by substituting real aesthetic enjoyment for the gratification of lower sensual appetites.

Art is learned from art and not from theory. The ancient highroad of drawing is the true way to become an artist. With the artist there is no inherited skill, all must be learned afresh by each generation; each student of art must begin at the beginning. In this respect, he differs from the man of

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(1) Art, Life and Nature in Japan. (M. Anesaki).

science for says Aldous Huxley, in the development of science a man begins where his predecessors left off.

Those who are enthusiastic for art and its development supply something nobler than a coterie, something more unselfish than a clique; they quicken into life a society keen on literature and art; they facilitate the interchange of ideas; they provide a healthy "humanistic" discipline in cultivating the student's taste, in sharpening his ear; they train men and women to handle materials and tools with skill and care; they educate people to control and guide emotion, to solve the many social problems that become inter-related, and they promote the artistic discernment of all, so as to increase their capacity for aesthetic delight.

A study in the arts and literatures helps people and students to escape, at least in some measure, from aesthetic prejudice, and to achieve a greater catholicity of taste. In this as in other realms, most people are provincial in their outlook, and as a consequence, their aesthetic enjoyment and insight are seriously limited by such provincialism.

Today it must be realised that art is more needed when the gramophone, the cinema, and the wireless,—results and expressions of mechanisation, produce their soporific effect on the people. Art in its relationships to society is transitory, it cannot persist. The artist needs an audience, he requires the satisfaction of effective contacts with the community; he finally demands the freedom to develop his creativeness according to inward necessity, and without impulsion of exterior standards.

Indian (1) art presupposes an acceptance of the principle that great art is not necessarily an imitation or illusion of nature, but that a generalised, conventional or symbolic representation of man and of nature can express both the form and the spiritual forces that dominate it. Chinese art and education look to the past, the training consists of copying the masters. Japanese art dislikes ordinary symmetry or regularity; Canadian art is tending at present to a wider outlook; American (2) art represents a conflict between foreign influences and native impulses, but is now moving towards an "American" style. In painting, in sculpture and music, America is in a transitional stage, characterised by much uncertainty, much experimentation and strong foreign influences. The "modernist" movement reached America in 1913. William Morris, (1834-1896) in England protested against separating art from life, he wished to make it vital. The pre-Raphael Brotherhood of seven young men (1848) aimed at regaining the spirit of the age that preceded Raphael; and in bringing back the old

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(1) Art Through the Ages. (Helen Gardner).

(2) The Arts in American Life. (Keppel and Duffus).

ideal of the craftsman, who made things not only useful, but beautiful in shape, line, pattern, and colour. The blending of the utilitarian and the beautiful, today holds sway in England. Australian art in its many phases, with its paintings treating of social themes and its aspects of contemporary life, with its tendency to personify everything, differing in this respect from the orientals who do not personify, but describe things human in terms of things natural e.g. a face like a flower, eyebrows like a new moon, represents praiseworthy attempts to produce a national art. Japanese (1) art, according to M. Anesaki, enters into the daily life of the people.

Australian art, too, is in a stage of transition and the following trends are noticeable—its definite break with eclecticism, its feeling for new materials, its wider and greater use of colour, its simple directness, its emphasis on form and design, its cultural internationalism, its close understanding of the art of the past. It might be added also, that the artists are finding their natural place in the community, and their contention is that art should be taught to all, that it should not be a sort of secret code for an élite, but that the inner life should be shared by all. In education, they maintain, the appreciation of art should play a greater part than it does. They would like to see the school grow into an effective agency for the development of a nation-wide basis of an elementary consciousness of beauty, and a more general understanding of the place of art in industry and commerce. Art proves its great potentialities, as increasing leisure and a rising standard of living become the order of the day. Art is deeply rooted in human life; it is today an important factor in human behaviour.

A lasting and vital native art, however, demands more than the creation of a few great men: it (1) demands a general artistic awareness, an understanding of contemporary life, an intelligent use of great tradition and the ability to give the stamp of the universal to what has been inspired by the particular.

Art, it is maintained, is not a quality of things but an activity of man, and aesthetic contemplation is not a rare esoteric state but a common and familiar one. More philosophy would cause the misunderstanding that frequently arises between the artists and the public to disappear.

The poet in his sanctuary, the composer in his lonely vigils, the painter at his easel or in his studio, the sculptor in his struggle to give form to his inner vision; the musician during his daily discipline and his unremitting practice, all do their utmost in their quest for perfection, but such efforts

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(1) Art, Life and Nature in Japan. (M. Anesaki).

(1) A Short History of Canadian Art. (G. McInnes).

are not quite sufficient; determination and industry undoubtedly play a big part in producing effective results, but the social forces must be considered, the skilful use of opportunities must not be neglected. Judicious appreciation by the public is essential if a work of art is to make an impression, to be authoritatively appraised, and to create an aesthetic interest. Not only must a work of art be beautiful in itself, but it must be beautifully shown, and admirably adapted to the field it occupies, to the occasion in which it is presented, and to the audience fitted to receive it, but proper appreciation (1) depends upon the ability of the spectator to place himself en rapport with the creator of the work.

"The (2) test of a great work is to see if it can dominate or fill a position decoratively. The function of art is to beautify, and its province extends to everything made by the hand of man." When a work of art is suited to its environment, the aesthetic contemplation follows.

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(1) *Five Arts.* (F. E. Halliday).

(2) *Art and Life.* A lecture delivered in S.A. by L. Bernard Hall, 1918.



## PART THREE.

### CHAPTER FOURTEEN.

#### THE PHILOSOPHY OF AESTHETICISM.

##### SECTION ONE.

##### THE INTRODUCTION.

The development of Australian aestheticism has been set out in detail; the phases of its expression, i.e. the sections of the aesthetic field have been observed; evidence has been supplied to indicate in what particulars emphasis in one aesthetic sphere has been more potent than in another; a criticism of the Australian aesthetic has been submitted, there now remains to state what the philosophy underlying the Australian aesthetic is, in what manner it reconciles the sensuous world with the ideal, and what problems still face the future of its aesthetics. Philosophy is essentially reflection, but it can advance in the direction of description; it can move in the manner of presentation and become exposition; its main work is speculation; philosophy is only a word used for seeing things in their true perspective. It is a subject cultivated by the greatest intellects of the age and listened to by the rest of the world.

The study of philosophy surveys many subjects; in aesthetics it deals (1) with the contributions of the writers of different countries; it supplies to the world of thought the ideas of the great men of the spiritual sphere; it points out what perfection is and in what way it can be attained, and, *inter alia*, it seeks to secure a definition of what is meant by the Beautiful.

In this chapter it will be necessary to indicate what the problem of aesthetic philosophy is, and what some of the psychological phenomena that are mentioned in such philosophy include, the details of the philosophers who have given the matter their attention and consideration, and in what respects their theories differ or clash are only referred to; to elaborate particulars would require another volume.

##### AESTHETIC PHILOSOPHY.

The field of aesthetics is a wide one spreading over all heaven and earth; nor is it merely limited to investigating the

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(1) History of Aesthetic. (Bosanquet).

concept of the beautiful. The phrase aesthetically unsatisfactory or aesthetically satisfying has a pronounced significance. The aesthetic is what we experience directly. If a picture—a masterpiece gives one an ecstatic emotion, if a poem stirs a feeling within one, if a piece of music sways all with its dramatic power or beautiful expression, then the presence of the aesthetic is certain, even though men are by no means agreed as to what conditions a masterpiece, or what constitutes a perfect piece of music. A sweet (2) taste or a fresh smell is as definitely aesthetic as the rhythmic patterns of a dance, or the complex sonorities of great music. It is with sharp perception of such isolated elements that the aesthetic aspect of the world first comes to an individual.

Aesthetics is regarded as a branch of knowledge, but it is knowledge of qualities in their immediacy, and their immediacy as grasped relations, directly apprehended. The knowledge arises from generalisations (1) from data, as all knowledge is, but its aim is intimacy with immediate content at once sensuous and structural, a readiness of grasp in the broad qualitative field. Aesthetics does not teach how to write poetry, or to build cathedrals, or to depict the landscape on canvas, but it teaches us something of what we hear in music, or see in a building, or enjoy in our everyday surroundings. It is as aesthetic beings that we can best enjoy the aesthetic effect of the world as we are directly acquainted with it.

Aesthetic philosophy deals with psychological phenomena in its problems; it examines the nature of the aesthetic sense, the constituents of an aesthetic experience, the development of an aesthetic ideal, the field covered by the aesthetic aspect, and finally philosophy seeks to ascertain what in reality is the explanation of beauty i.e., what is its essence or nature?

### THE AESTHETIC SENSE.

The aesthetic sense is regarded as the ability or the discipline required to appreciate the beautiful. The existence of this sense is found in all cultures and it is endowed with certain fundamental principles of composition and design, just as there are fundamental rhythms and patterns in all human lives.

The aesthetic sense or aspect deals with the visible, the outward forms of life, either to improve them or render them more attractive to a refined mind, and to make them more in harmony with the standard of appreciation of the highest ideals of culture and expression. The (1) aesthetic sense plays

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(1) Aesthetic Analysis. (D. W. Prall).

(2) Ibid.

(1) Aesthetic Analysis. (D. W. Prall).

a big part in the theory of art. Life presents to the man or the artist the raw materials; the way in which those materials are used represents the aesthetic element, the endeavour to make the beauty endure. The artist or writer or musician works through a medium. Each tries to formulate his experience of beauty; the effort is a spiritual experience; the appreciation of the medium in which each works represents the aesthetic side. The whole is an emotional experience, an aesthetic one.

A sunset is observed and enjoyed; when painted it becomes a permanent possession; the picture is an artistic creation, a consciously directed activity. The painting, as a work of art, lasts; it endures, not only as a material achievement, but as a spiritual utterance addressed not only to the physical eye or the auditory nerve, but to an inward vision and a spiritual ear. Man wishes to preserve the picture, to capture and hold fast the rapture of the moment occasioned by the beauty of what is observed. As a spiritual being he is aware of something that calls for permanence, a hunger for what is above earth. Art, therefore, is man's attempt to secure that perfection, or, as P. Dearmer (2) says, "the expression of spiritual values in terms of Beauty."

(3) One finds the aesthetic sense, to a degree, displayed in ordinary affairs such as the arrangement of flowers, the decoration of a room, the choice of dress colours, the selection of pictures, the lay-out of a garden, the planning of a home and such things. In a higher sense the arts, whatever the medium of their techniques, express the aesthetic sense. Music makes a powerful appeal to one's aesthetic nature; elocution has its aesthetic appeal too; men of education receive delight from the consideration of antiquity; the study of certain subjects stirs the emotions; the scenery of external nature charms and elevates the mind.

The (4) 19th century drew a sharp distinction between the aesthetic and the practical. Rimbaud maintained that the world of poetry had nothing to do with the world of affairs. Arthur Symonds held that the artist played no part in social life; the ordinary man assumed that "fine art" was something reserved for museums, and that a useful art was not really art at all. This view does not hold today, but a more liberal idea prevails that the aesthetic is not a strange visitation from without, a something that dwells in deep retreats, in shaded halls and dark recesses. To some, the aesthetic sense means "taste," and while taste is not beauty, its possession connotes a high degree of intellectual superiority.

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(1) *An Essay Towards a Theory of Art.* (L. Abercrombie)

(2) "Art and Religion." (P. Dearmer).

(3) "What is Beauty." (E. F. Carrill).

(4) "Science and Criticism." (H. J. Muller).

The many societies that exist to further culture, the social gatherings of men and women where the standard of achievement is high, the church pulpit, the operatic stage, the concert platform, the choral gathering, are all centres for exercising the aesthetic sense; all represent places where excellence is the aim.

### THE AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE.

An aesthetic experience is really an aesthetic appeal or an aesthetic consciousness. In the past (1) moral and religious ideas had the power of arousing interest in people, but the creations of fine art, painting, literature, architecture, music, etc., possess a much greater power. Their importance increases, with the passing of time. If one's interest is stirred by social customs, by niceties of language, the beauty of a poem, the charm of a picture, the glory of a natural scene, the grandeur of a mountain, the roll of the ocean, etc., and that interest assumes the form of a delight, a pleasure, or even an ecstasy producing a feeling of happiness or exaltation, then at that moment the term aesthetic experience has a meaning for the individual concerned.

The aesthetic experience may be felt and enjoyed at any time and in any place. The artist endeavours to put his experience on the canvas; the sculptor makes use of the stone or marble; the musician uses the musical note or chord to give his impression of the experience that he has had. The arts tend to make such aesthetic experiences endure—thus "The rainbow fades, but Wordsworth's Ode preserves the glory and the dream; the sunset dies, but Turner's canvas holds the splendour fast; the tombstone crumbles over beauty that has perished, but Shakespeare keeps its radiant grace alive in *Rosalind*."

This contest between the material setting and the spiritual working has an aesthetic significance. The science of geology is interesting, not to the rocks and stones, but to the human side. Human interest gives antiques their value, Egyptology its meaning, the path of Orion an interpretation and so on. The humanistic touch spiritualising things is aestheticism. Consequently it is related to art, beauty, mysticism, spiritual experience, life.

The specifically aesthetic emotion or experience is the delight in the contemplation of technical ability, as manifested in its result. The poet composes a poem, and the aesthetic emotion is the delight that accompanies contemplating this made thing in its well-madeness. The critic of a poem detaches himself from the effect it has had on him: he views that effect objectively from the outside; only thus he can see

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(1) History of Aesthetic. (Bosanquet).

(a) what technical ability has been brought to the production of the effects and (b) what is the human value of the effect. The making of poetry is a highly technical occupation, hence its appreciation or criticism must likewise demand considerable technical knowledge—Mr. Eliot says a greater grasp of the technique is needed for the appreciation of a poem than for the writing of one.

H. Siebeck (1) says the most characteristic feature of aesthetic experience and of the aesthetic attitude in general is a peculiar variety of perception. The perception of beauty is a kind of appreciation—it connotes a mingling of things with the association and recollection of the image.

Psychology plays a prominent part in aesthetics. Association of ideas enters into the creation of taste; feelings of beauty spring from psychological causes; education, experience, beliefs, traditions, customs, etc., influence aesthetics, but it is as difficult to define dogmas of aesthetic orthodoxy as it is to devise a code of reliable criticism.

Aesthetics (2) has its materials, methods, and aspects, according to R. W. Church. Taste cannot be discussed, nor communicated by discourse, but unity within variety in design, uniformity in attraction, sequence, balance represent the methods and these are considered the laws that govern the formal qualities of all aesthetic objects.

It is difficult to perceive or define the exact relation that a work of art bears to the personal experience of its creator, and to trace the extent to which the one is the outcome of the other. It is more difficult in music than in any other art, because it is the most self-contained and seemingly the least in contact with anything outside itself. A work of art which has no relation to life, but is derived from aesthetic experience only, is incapable of holding one's attention, once the seductive glamour of the first encounter has given place to familiarity. A good literary example of this is to be found in Swinburne. At first, his readers are enthusiastic about him, and then later on, they become gradually disenchanted. Latin in the Middle Ages was regarded as the main vehicle of expression, but today, it is not so clearly related to life, and hence its decline in the cultural world.

Racial differences of outlook and mentality exist in music, as well as in other spheres of activity, and as a result, the average Italian does not appreciate the music of Schuman; the typical German does not understand Ravel; and the French, as a body, are not enthusiastic about the music of Vaughan Williams, the Englishman.

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(1) *Das Wesen der Ästhetischen Anschauung.* (H. Siebeck).

(2) *An Essay on Critical Appreciation.* (R. W. Church).

### THE AESTHETIC IDEAL

Philosophy asks too what is an aesthetic ideal: According to Hegel: "The ideal is the idea so translated into terms or tendencies of the imagination as to be capable of direct or indirect presentation to sense. Concreteness is the bridge to artistic realisation." The world (1) of imagined beauty or concrete fancy, which is called the "ideal," passes through phases determined by the progression of intelligence. The ideal is the perfection of what is visualised yet it is difficult to state in precise terms its exact definition. I have in my mind an idea of what an ideal beauty is, or what constitutes an ideal holiday, an ideal society, an ideal poem, yet no matter how complete the explanation may be, yet it fails in some particulars.

Beyond all the imperfect beauty that nature gives, and man has made, we seek a beauty—a stubborn reality, that will not be gainsaid, an ideal of the human spirit. We live not for facts primarily, but for ideals—the ideals in terms of which it is our task to use and mould all the facts that science can give—it is our fundamental ideals that finally give the world any consistent meaning. Immortality for example is an ideal, and without immortality, our lives would be manifestly and absurdly inconsistent and unreasonable.

The man with the aesthetic ideal loves nature in all its moods—the bright sky by day, the myriad stars by night, the smiling valley, the shady woods, the murmuring rills, the carols of the birds, the perfume of the flowers, etc. He also loves his fellow man, with his oddities and imperfections, his efforts to achieve success, his failures to record progress, but who as a zealous citizen helps forward any movement for the public good. The (2) aesthetic ideal presents a picture to man of God's love and beauty addressing itself to all the avenues of the soul through eye, ear and heart. The soul cherishes visions which excel achievement, and ideals which actualities only seem to mock, the reason being that the soul is never truly satisfied with things as finalities, because it is greater than them all.

One can sharpen his aesthetic discrimination to the finest edge and yet take but small pleasure in beauty. Even the "oracles" of artistic Societies sometimes surprise the public with their decisions and their verdicts on what is really beautiful. In literature there are often men of delicacy or peculiar genius whose work makes little appeal to the people, yet it is often of a very high standard. Beauty has objective worth; its expression, whether in nature or in art, possesses as a right,

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(1) History of the Aesthetic. (Bosanquet).

(1) "Art and Religion." (P. Dearmer).

a value and a significance for the world at large. It can(2) be safely said that the sublime or beautiful is felt when one's imagination is kindled by the experience, and when the individual loses himself in the multiplicity of images that pass before his mind, and when he awakens at least from his play of fancy as from the charm of a romantic dream.

Aestheticians rarely allude to the change that one undergoes in his aesthetic ideas and ideals, as he grows older. It is a common experience with people to hold a higher aesthetic with advancing years, with more experience, or with the possession of a wider knowledge. The pictures once admired, the poems formerly loved, the tunes in early life regarded so highly, the public speakers who at gatherings carried away their hearers, the ceremonies that so forcibly fascinated and exalted the onlookers, no longer make a striking appeal; the eyes of maturity view things differently, the analytic process has become more discriminating. Gray's *Elegy* once assessed as the perfect poem, lacks in one's later life the supreme quality, Scott's novels provide but tedious reading, Dickens is considered too sentimental, Keats too immature, the realists too overdone to savour of truth, idealists too vague to secure followers, economists too involved to be socially helpful.

If the appreciation of the Beautiful varies with our age, and our discrimination becomes more judicial due to greater skill and educational efficiency, it does not mean that all former verdicts are wholly reversed or disowned, but it follows that with wider experience, and a more involved scholarship, an individual's content has become enlarged and more profound, with the result that the past is viewed in a different light, and with a deeper and more critical analysis.

### WHAT IS THE BEAUTIFUL.

In all aesthetic experiences beauty enters—a beauty that is essentially the object of intelligence. Spiritual beauty is immeasurably higher than that which is merely physical, because it is a more complete expression of the beauty which is wholly Spirit, a close approach to the beauty which is absolute. Philosophy mainly concerns itself with the wide question—what is Beauty? The answer presents a difficulty.

It is known that all literature is not art, that some paintings merely perform the functions of relaxation and adjustment, and that many forms of architecture have purely utilitarian value. Some conceptions, too, of Beauty are quite unsatisfactory. Aristotle said that beauty of art depends on faithful reproduction or "imitation of nature," but the camera has made that view untenable. Roger Fry and Clive Bell use

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(2) "The Sudden Rose." (Blanche Kelly).

the phrase "Significant (1) Form" as an explanation of Beauty, but this idea does not explain why form is considered beautiful if they reveal truth, or the spirit of nature, or the ideal, or the universal.

"Beauty is the idea, as it shows itself to sense," is the definition given by Hegel. Hegel speaks of beauty of form, of nature, of art, but his exposition is on the whole neither whole-hearted nor convincing. All beauty (2) is in perception or imagination but things have not beauty independently of human perception.

Although aesthetics is the philosophy of the beautiful, and its subject matter the concept of beauty, still the word beauty must be understood in its widest significance, and to include in its purview, every variety of aesthetic experience, every shade of the science of experience generally. Aesthetics is also thought to be concerned solely with illusions in contrast with realities. The aesthetic experience, according to A. P. McMahon (3), consists of an oscillation between illusion and reality; it is also defined as the expression, or communication of emotion. Beauty is the quality of a form, when you contemplate it; aesthetics is the organisation of concepts relating to this quality. A work of art has a quality significant and stimulating in power for the man who made it, and for those who first enjoyed it.

Most philosophers are interested in ascertaining the common quality or qualities, which entitles a thing to be termed beautiful, but the success of their speculations is not too satisfactory. Their results mostly refer to objects of sight, i.e. what is pleasing to the eye. The blind boy, however, says that a poem is beautiful, and that an address he listened to on the radio was the most beautiful explanation of art he ever heard.

However, if a number of things are beautiful, e.g. a flower, a cathedral, a painting, a sunset, a poem, a play of Shakespeare, etc., what common nature exists in all these things by which all produce in an individual a single impression which is specifically aesthetic?

Aesthetic philosophers viewing their subject, either from a subjective or an objective point of view, although their answers differ widely and their interpretations of beauty vary to a considerable degree, mostly agree on one point—that beautiful objects are always concrete and never abstract. The flower, the cathedral, the painting, etc., are material objects, occupying space and can be seen and touched: they are not abstractions. A poem is a composition, something concrete, music is

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- (1) The Foundation of Aesthetics. (Ogden Richards).
  - (2) History of Aesthetic. (Bosanquet).
  - (3) The Art of Enjoying Art. (A. P. McMahon)



made up of sounds that the ear hears; the daffodil flower in the garden is beautiful, not the abstract idea of a flower, hence a beautiful object is perceptual in character. In this respect we have, at least one difference between an art and a science.

In the objective beauty of the world both an intrinsic and an extrinsic element exist; in the subjective (1) appreciation of beauty there is of necessity a mingling of the uniform with the variable, the essential with the accidental. In both forms there is something inherent, something derived. The extrinsic element is wholly relative, and it appeals differently to each individual. The intrinsic element, on the other hand, exists for each one and for all absolutely. Those things in nature and humanity are most beautiful which suggest what transcends themselves. All beautiful objects—possessing colour, form, and motion, affect the mind primarily through the senses, but the sensations they produce or elicit, become less in intensity, when they are blended.

Croce (2) holds that "nature is only beautiful for the man who sees it with the eye of an artist . . . without the aid of imagination, nothing in nature is beautiful, and with its aid according to our disposition the same thing is expressed now without meaning; now expressive in one way, now in another. Man faced with natural beauty is exactly the mythical Narcissus at the pool."

Among philosophers according to E. M. Bartlett (3), there exists a curious reluctance to assent to the conclusion that nature is beautiful "in her own right." Such reluctance he holds can be traced to a prejudice in favour of the view that beauty must mean the same thing in nature as in art.

It would seem then that no definition of beauty meets with universal acceptance. The ancients connected with their fundamental theory of the beautiful, the notion of rhythm, symmetry and harmony of parts, but the moderns lay stress on "the idea (4) of significance, expressiveness, the utterance of all that life contains". Bosanquet defines beauty:—"That which has characteristic or individual expressiveness for sense-perception or imagination, subject to the conditions of general or abstract expressiveness in the same medium." (5) Bosanquet feels that science, the awakening of the romantic sense of beauty, the theory of the sublime and the analysis of the ugly enlarge the field of aesthetic appreciation, and now both the

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(1) *The Philosophy of the Beautiful*. (W. Knight).

(2) *Aesthetics*, Page 99.

(3) *Types of Aesthetic Judgment*. (E. M. Bartlett).

(4) *A History of Aesthetic*. (Bosanquet).

(5) *Ibid*

sublime and the ugly are considered within the general frontier of beauty. The term pleasure needs consideration too.

Whether conceptional thought enters into the composition of aesthetic experience is the crux of the aesthetic problem for the schools of philosophy. A thing is not beautiful because we are moved by it, but often we are moved by it because it is beautiful. Things, too, are not beautiful because they give pleasure, but only in so far as they give aesthetic pleasure, and sometimes what is pleasant to the untrained sense may not be genuinely beautiful. The apprehension of the beautiful is cognitive in character. Stace (1) maintains that this apprehension is an awareness, while Croce holds that it is an intuition; both would seem to believe that the process of apprehension is an immediate one.

Beauty is definable in terms of the aesthetic emotion, i.e. we recognise beauty because it moves us aesthetically, but it is also objective: one man is effected, another unmoved while a third person is perhaps repelled. Under many forms beauty (2) appears: it may be visible or audible in nature or art, or it may be experienced as an emotion within an emotion. Bosanquet (3) deals with three theories concerning beauty—the moralistic principle, the metaphysical one and the aesthetic one. Aesthetically, he contends, beauty is purely formal, consisting in certain very abstract conditions which are satisfied for example in elementary geographical figures, as truly as in the creations of fine art.

Now art is concerned with a percept, while science, and the same is true of philosophy, is concerned with concepts. All beautiful objects are perceptual, i.e. externally perceptual, but the question can be asked can non-sensuous objects be beautiful, can psychic objects call for our admiration?

Some philosophers insist that most of the arts are sensuous and hence that beauty is sensuous, but W. T. Stace (1) maintains that such a view is a serious blunder, for in subjects like literature and drama, beauty must be admitted to display itself in internal percepts. The phrase that man has a beautiful character is surely sanely used, and in this case the sensuous element is missing. Moral goodness, no doubt, is implied in the phrase "beautiful character", but the character we are dealing with is beautiful in a way that it makes an aesthetic impression on others. Furthermore, beauty is a case of cognition, either one of perception or of conception. As a beautiful object is concrete, it cannot be a pure abstraction or a concept, then the awareness of beauty must be an

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(1) The Meaning of Beauty. (W. T. Stace).

(2) Five Arts. (F. W. Halliday).

(3) History of Aesthetic (Bosanquet).

act of perception. If beauty were solely a physical quality then artistic taste would depend upon the possession of definite physical senses, thus keen sight should make one a critic of painting, a good ear a decisive factor in music, while animals with acuter senses than man should be able to appreciate beauty better, hence it would appear that perception alone is not sufficient.

Stace (1) offers an alternative as a solution of the problem, first that the apprehension of beauty depends upon a combination of concept and percept, or, it depends on intuition. Two philosophers—Bergson and Croce maintain the intuition theory, but Croce has elaborated his theory more fully, viz. that Beauty is the expression of an intuition. Stace (1) argues that the intuition theory, as the basis of a satisfactory theory of aesthetics, is conceptless, and as such, is incapable of explaining the validity of the aesthetic judgment. "This picture is beautiful, is beautiful not for one person, but that all persons of good taste should take pleasure in it." A judgment of taste claims to be valid for all men. The apprehension of beauty according to Stace is neither a pure art of conception, nor of perception, nor of intuition, but an organic combination of a concept and of a percept and the view finds expression in the idealistic aesthetic of Hegel.

The concept must be fused in the percept in a special way, and must disappear in it—the relation between the two must be organic. This statement, Stace considers, is the basis of a rational aesthetic, and he summarises his proposition thus: "Beauty (2) is the fusion of an intellectual content, consisting of empirical non-perceptual contents, with a perceptual field, in such a manner that the intellectual content and the perceptual field are indistinguishable from each other and in such a manner as to constitute the revelation as an aspect of reality."

But, for beauty to be the organic fusion of percepts and concepts does not explain why the perception of beauty yields a sense of pleasure and exaltation. Concepts which include the whole wealth of man's intellectual life, Stace (2) named empirical non-perceptual concepts, and these when fused with a field of immediacy, give rise to a special sense of pleasure and exaltation.

Stace does not insist that his theory of aesthetics is the true theory—in fact, he feels that while no conclusive proof is possible, his theory is highly probable. In this respect, he differs from many philosophers whose views are omnisci-

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(1) The Meaning of Beauty. (W. T. Stace).

(2) Ibid, Page 43.

ent, dogmatic, final. Even Croce in recent times announces his expressionist theory with an *ex cathedra* assurance, with a High Court judicial confidence that might worry the layman, or even disconcert the scientific man. In the world of politics variations are frequent; in the world of art-criticism controversy arises; in the social sphere problems call for solution. Philosophy, too, advances towards an ideal, utilising suggestions and hypotheses, but the deep problems of man's spiritual life lie within the human spirit. In aesthetic science the facts of beauty appear, long periods of time make no difference to the facts; hence an hypothesis as to what beauty means is put forward, and reasons assigned for the adoption of such hypothesis. If the hypothesis can be verified by analysing typical cases of beauty in art—a process in which a high degree of probability may be attained, the probability becomes more certain, and the certainty increases when in the course of time, the hypothesis stands the test of criticism.

(1) Although so many varied definitions of beauty have been given—the hedonistic, the puritan, the pedagogic, the mystical, etc., still according to Mr. Knight (2), such definitions are only partial ones that throughout the ages the rival schools of philosophy have supplied. If all these definitions were combined, he maintains, a certain amount of truth and adequacy would be found, but finality and completeness would be missing; objections can be raised to every definition put forward.

A critic (3) asks what are the assured results in aesthetics and he answers:—"On no point is there an agreement among writers. There is a lack of books which have profoundly influenced general opinion: there is also a general lack of interest in reading the books, and the books on aesthetics are by no means satisfactory. If aesthetics is defined as the Philosophy of the Beautiful confusion arises, for art does now unquestionably concern itself with many things, e.g., the horrible, the strange, the tragic, the comic, and even the ugly, which cannot be classed as beautiful without violent straining of accepted language."

The philosophers and writers, however, are not discouraged because they do not all see alike, or that their aesthetic theories differ. The game, says Eric Newton (4), is to fascinating to be abandoned, and though it can never be brought to any satisfactory conclusion, the exercise it entails is a healthy one, the interest aroused is something worth while, and many enjoyable adventures are encountered on the way.

(1) Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic, (p. 155).

(2) The Philosophy of the Beautiful. (W. Knight).

(3) The Problem of Art. (Peter Green).

(4) The Artist and His Public. (Eric Newton).

In the case of painting the main obstacle to the full understanding of the art is its extraordinary complexity. Before the Renaissance (2) nine-tenths of the painting done represented what was seen by the mind's eye, but in modern times the physical eye plays the main part.

Some one has remarked that three types of men have made beautiful things: aristocrats, who have made beautiful manners; the countrymen, who have given rise to beautiful stories and beliefs; and the artists—people filled with recklessness. The aesthetes (1) would purge life of all its coarse, vulgar and trivial elements, accordingly they turn away in life from all its inartistic elements; they must see meaning or purpose in every day living. Poets, according to them, are members of a priesthood handing down their mysteries to their successors and conferring with one another, when they wish to develop or modify their ritual; they would make life quite static. Experience shows, however, that too perfect an existence is often awkward, even perfection on the stage is perhaps less enjoyable, while perfect human beings in all departments, tend to rob life of its charm and the future of its interests and expectancy. Art grows from life and in return illuminates it.

The exalted place in human life which is commonly assigned to art and the beautiful generally is justified by the fact that beauty is an absolute value. To put goodness above beauty or beauty above goodness is to imply that there are stages towards some common end, but there can be no comparison of merit between absolute values; each is unique in its own sphere, and in its own sphere, supreme. In the aesthetic experience, the less the subject is aware of the concepts involved, the more perfect is the feeling of the beautiful.

In aesthetics, as elsewhere in education, the Brahminical view of culture often persists, the idea that beauty is something that can be acquired by payment of money, that it does not arise naturally out of the good life—that it is something that can be plastered on an impoverished life—in short that it is a cosmetic. (3) To some the good life consists in the enjoyment of motor cars, the use of bath-tubs, heating systems, sun-bathing, the touch of tonics and the stimulus of drugs. The mould of fashion, the glass of form, the latest pattern change so frequently that it is often possible to hold Fashion Exhibitions to show, not only changes in clothes and dress, but also in literature, art, music, sculpture, etc., but aesthetic appreciation is not the outcome of action, of externals alone, it is

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(1) The Personal Principle. (D. S. Savage).

(2) Ibid.

(3) City Development. (Lewis Mumford).

a spiritual activity, for example, it has the eye for beauty and nature—the eye that sees it whole and sees it with that inner eye, which looks more for a quiet ultimate significance than for the mere glory of phenomena, working better in silence and in meditation. Every (1) artist is an ambassador from Parnassus: *Dona Deum Musae*. The most moving words of music and beauty carry one far forward towards a mystical experience—an experience that makes Autumn more than a blaze of red and gold, but the symbol of death and memories, the preparation for the resurrection that follows.

This section concludes by a query as to whether in the aesthetic future the sense of beauty will be still further extended, or whether the practice of art will cease where it has hitherto survived, and whether psychology will play a greater part in aesthetic experiences than it does at present. The question, too, is raised as to whether the poetry of the past—the set forms of the 17th century, for example, make an appeal to the students, artists and critics of the present day; what are the effects of scientific training upon aesthetic capacity; under what conditions does emotion disable or stimulate the power of expression, and finally what are the connections between sense and sound in poetry, or the physical association between content and expression in art

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(1) *The Meaning and Purpose of Art.* (A. R. Howell).

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN.

### Part A.

#### THE PHILOSOPHY OF AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE

The criticism of Australian Literature might be wisely followed by a statement of its philosophy, by which is understood the indulging principle of its composition. Poems are composed, books are printed, essays are prepared, lectures are read—all represent literature, but the philosophy of literature is something different, something higher. The poem, the prose, the essay, the lecture has in it some philosophical thought, some underlying ideal, some philosophy meant to improve one's moral outlook, to raise one's thoughts to higher planes, or to convey to another some spiritual message; a reason, in short, to justify the existence of the poem, the prose, or the essay.

A poem e.g. the "Ode on Immortality", by W. Wordsworth, or "The Hound of Heaven" by Francis Thompson, or "Paradise Lost" by Milton, The Plays of Shakespeare, etc., all have a philosophical implication, they are composed for some reason or other; they all convey a spiritual message—e.g., one poem advocates a social philosophy, another makes a supernatural appeal, a third has an ethical significance, a fourth a hedonistic call, a fifth displays a materialistic bias, while a final one might be a case of a philosophy of ideas, or of beauty as applied to selected words, for beautiful words are as a lantern to the mind.

No great book can be written without thought: it is for the reader to ascertain the thought that created the work, in other words the author's philosophy. A work of the imagination without some sort of philosophy is inconceivable; the closer it comes to life and reason, the more pregnant will be its philosophical significance. If it is possible by the study of an author to know his philosophy or system of thought, no less is it possible to learn the philosophy of a nation's literature, and the literature of one particular age. The Australian literature is the history of the Australian mind, and every example of its real literature reveals some problem of human thought and life in the Australian story.

When a man writes a poem or composes a piece of prose, the words he uses and the phrases he fashions, take their colour from his mind; he more or less expresses himself according to the philosophy he follows, thus an idealist's conception of a thing is vastly different from a materialist's idea, or a naturalist's outlook differs from that of a mystic's. When the poem is written, or the work produced, the critic assesses its worth, and indicates how the poem illustrates the philosophy

of love, or duty, or mateship, tolerance, perseverance, or some such ideal, or moral virtue—Thus Henry Lawson interprets to the world the philosophy of interest in one's fellow-man; Bernard O'Dowd, the claim to recognition of the ordinary man; J. B. O'Hara, the beauty of word composition; J. B. Stevens, the Commonwealth; Ian Mudie, nature; F. S. Williamson, beauty; Walter Murdoch, The little things of life; Professor M. W. MacCallum, sane and humane criticism; R. D. Fitzgerald, mysticism and finally the Jindyworobaks with their strong naturalistic outlook.

A poet conveys (1) his philosophical ideas, or preaches his doctrine by means of a theme, but the theme is only a medium, as the Nightingale was for Keats, or the Skylark for Shelley, or, in Australian literature "The Bush" was for O'Dowd. When Victor Daley sang of a world he knew, of a realm of music and faery lore that was his own peculiar racial inheritance, he was a lyrist. When A. B. Paterson, as a ballad singer, told his stories, his philosophy was to make life interesting for his readers; Quinn had exquisiteness in expression as an ideal for his philosophy; Henry Lawson, by advocating national principles, called for a new humanity in Australia to redress the uneven balance of the old, while The Bulletin proclaiming as its policy the love of Australia, stimulated a true sense of nationalism. It is generally recognised that "Poets are God's clergy of the rhythmic world: Priests in God's diocese of beauty!"

The philosophy can be demonstrated in prose as well as in poetry, in essay work and in biography, in the novel and in literary criticism, in fact, in all forms and phases of literature. When the prose or novel is being read, the reader becomes aware that a definite philosophy is being inculcated—a philosophy impregnating his mind and soul. The interest in the story read, has added to it the philosophic lesson that is being quietly but effectively instilled. All poems, stories, essays, treatises, etc., are modes of interpretative thinking, and cannot be devoid of philosophy. The main function of all literature is spiritual idealisation, and consequently all literature is an interpretation of life.

The true philosophy of literature is also an enquiry into the causes that have made great books what they are, or why some books remain favourites and endure, while others are so quickly forgotten. The Philosophy of Literature is also particularly concerned with the intellectual, moral and spiritual implications of books, especially in their effect on society and civilisation. All works claiming the quality of literature, are

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(1) Literary Craftsmanship and Appreciation. (R. Fuller).



subject to the following enquiry—Are they sound or unsound? Are they based on reason, history, or experience?

The main (1) business of philosophy is to be the guide and guard of the general reason, that is the reasonable life, as it is actually lived by man. Philosophy liberates the mind from prejudice and ignorance, and prepares it to receive illumination from sources beyond the lecture room and the scholastic hall. The great world, however, prefers novels to philosophy, practical matters to metaphysics, yet philosophy, art, religion, politics, science and education, are all essential human activities, all are necessary to carry on civilisation.

Some poetry, like Shakespeare's, enables a man to descend deeper into the heart. As he descends he recognises that there is something intangible, inexpressible, a mystery in each heart. Such a mystery has always been recognised. What is that mystery? Is it philosophy dissatisfied with its enquiry and seeking for further illumination, is it something beyond man to express, or is it mysticism? In art we know a thing is beautiful, but why do we know? In poetry we also recognise that the lines before us touch the sublime, but how do we know? It is said that we know by intuition, and there the explanation ceases.

(2) Middleton Murry explained his philosophy of poetry by recourse to Catholic mysticism—he gives one the impression that poetry provides a sort of knowledge different from national knowledge, a feeling of presence, a contact, a realisation something like what is found in Wordsworth's "Prelude", or Patmore's "Religio Poetae". Poetry provides the beauty that tends to unite men to God; it provides the experience that is called a poetic experience and this poetic experience is akin to a mystical experience—some go so far as to say that a poet is a broken-down mystic—There is always something so great and so divine in life and character, as well as in nature, that only the intenser light of poetry reveals it and keeps it luminant.

When Julian Tenison Woods, W. B. Clarke, Baron Von Mueller and T. W. Edgeworth David wrote their scientific books, they were actuated by a philosophical urge; the same can be said of the writers of history, education, economics, and even many of the novelists in the Australian literary field. The philosophical ideal may have been the desire to organise the knowledge available, to supply a want that was felt, to beautify what had only been imperfectly prepared, or to unify what appeared to be scattered, and to present a nobler pattern than the one previously provided, or, it is even possible that an element of vanity gave rise to the philosophical urge, the de-

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(1) Art. (Clive Bell).

(2) J. M. Murry.

sire to be a master speaking to his peers, or an artist keen to touch the supreme humanities by means of great art, to create the aesthetic for his people and in an endeavour to attain perfection to make the exterior (2) world the scene of one's triumphs.

The components of the salt which preserve literature are interesting matter, sincerity, and sanity (1) of thought and feeling, unaffected truth to nature and high simplicity of powerful luminous and beautiful expression, and above all a philosophy in the background. The matter must have thoughts, suggestions, revelations, moral and emotional stirrings—if you wish to convince others by your poem, or your prose, you must, yourself, believe—if you wish to please others you must first be pleased.

"I do but sing because I must,  
And pipe but as the linnets sing."

Some poems have in them a philosophy but not the true philosophy. The poet must see things not only with the mind but with the soul also. The verses must have a joyous singing quality, the buoyancy of true life, the finer spirit of true knowledge to which it is necessary to add the impassioned expression.

G. Mackaness in his "Poets of Australia," says there are more than two hundred Australian poets, and he in his anthology presents to his readers the cream of them. He says, too, that he has his literary likes and dislikes—he included in his book many writers that appealed to him, he omitted some like William Baylebridge that failed to impress him. It is possible he meant that the philosophy of some writers and poets is more apparent than others, or that the search for it in their writings is less difficult in some poems than in others.

Again, the interpretation of some poets appears often difficult at first—their philosophy is not immediately grasped. William Baylebridge and Christopher Brennan come under this heading and as a consequence, they have not been appreciated to the full by their contemporaries. It is generally accepted that with the lapse of time, and more sympathetic study of their poetry, they will gain in appreciation and be better understood.

The elevation of the purpose distinguishes literature within literature, while the greatest literature of all—the literature that scarcely exists, has an aesthetic object, as well as a didactic one, but also a creative one: that of subjecting its readers to a real, and at the same time, an illuminating experience.

Katherine Mansfield, an American writer, felt that there was something wanting in literary art even at its highest. "The greatest literature," she said, "is still only mere literature."

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(2) A Psychology of Artistic Creation. (H. E. Rees).

(1) Selected Essays and Critical Writing. (A. R. Orage).

if it has not a purpose commensurate with its art." She felt also, that it was not writing as writing that calls for criticism, correction, and perfection, so much as the mind, character and personality of the writer. She tired of writing or rather she had a feeling of self-contempt, when she read the stories she had written. (1) "There is not one," she said, "that I dare show to God." Evidently, she had written without a philosophy behind her work; she had in the past presented merely one aspect of life and her attitude was to see only one aspect with an evil result, whereas she felt that her attitude should have been different; the pattern should change, and a new attitude to life on the part of writers would first see life differently, and then make it different. Instead of admiring the endurance of heroes or sympathising with their sorrows or laughing at their ineptitude, the laugh should be with them; they should anticipate the passive spectator, and each act as if the problem were their's to solve. Katherine Mansfield died at the age of 33 before she was able to put into practice her new type of story.

Poets like O'Dowd, Fitzgerald and "Furnley Maurice" tell us that if poetry is to interpret life, it must grow as life grows by continual inspiration of genius from the hidden "Beauty of the Universe" and as poetry makes immortal all that is best and most beautiful in the world, it is the philosophy behind it, that gives it such power, and makes it a reservoir of spiritual energy. "All beauty," says Maritain, "all beauty tends of itself to unite us to God."

Beauty, as presented to the senses and the mind, is the natural theme of all poets, and beauty is passive philosophy. Literature is a manifestation of goodness, beauty and truth—conceptions of the universal. In all literature the true teacher never forgets that he is only an apprentice to his subject. The true teacher is a philosopher too, and it is the philosophic spirit in him, which makes him realise that the greatest (2) poetry deserves to be inscribed in gold, and set imperishably before man's eyes with the approval of every generation of poets. The great teacher makes the student feel that his intellect is stimulated poetically and otherwise by contact with the seminal mind of a superior man.

"For the Term of His Natural Life" is a novel—a realistic one. Marcus Clarke wrote it to show the bad effects of a wretched penal system. There was a philosophy behind his literary effort. He told his story as a story, and seemingly tried to hid the aim of his work, and so skilfully did he succeed, that the reader is carried away with the story; it is only afterwards that he is struck with the moral—or that the work in-

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(1) Poetry and Poets. (Edited by R. Brimley Johnson)

(2) The Language of Poetry. (H. F. Sampson).

dicates the philosophy behind it. The same is true with other books. "My Love Must Wait", "The Timeless Land", "Capricornia", etc. It is the same with poetry and short stories, poetry preaches courage, mateship, democracy, sympathy, nobility. Philosophy is marked in O'Dowd's poems, in those of Adam Lindsay Gordon, Hubert Church, Lessor, Ingamells, etc.—in fact in every poet worthy of the name.

Literature is the lens that brings life to a proper perspective for accurate observation and understanding. We bring (1) the body, soul, and spirit, to the garden of literature, and search for the best results. When we grow vegetables we secure the required constituents before we obtain our growth; the ground is only the opportunity of producing special riches. How much better must the results be for literature when the individual too brings first forth the necessary constituents. Literature (2) is a form of knowledge which as a form cannot of itself be final and absolute truth for every one who reads it, because one can only find in it what he brings to it, and often to understand the philosophy of literature, a knowledge of the supernatural and religion is necessary.

The interior life, which a love of literature helps to develop, is nothing else than a knowledge of the true and a love of the good, or better, a knowledge of and a love of God. To know (3) the interior life of a nation it is necessary to penetrate to its soul through its literature, its philosophy and its arts, for in those are reflected the ideas, the passions and the dreams of a whole people.

Such are the inexhaustible riches of the spirit, that they can be the property of all and yet satisfy the desires of each. When we teach a truth to others, we possess it more completely; only when we truly love a virtue do we wish others to love it also. If we give money away, it is no longer ours, but to impart knowledge, or to radiate our happiness to others is to benefit our own. The more material goods are sought for their own sake, the more do they tend to cause disunion among men, but spiritual goods unite men more closely in proportion as they are more greatly loved. Hence it would appear that the interior or the spiritual life is necessary, and that it offers some solution to social and economic questions. It indicates too, that the enjoyment of earthly pleasures is not the highest good, nor that the increase in quantity of material enjoyment compensates for the poor quality, and that it is unwise to seek the ultimate goal where it is not to be found.

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(1) A Treatise on the Distinction between Philosophy, Literature, and Religion. (M. B. Hungerford).

(2) Ibid.

(3) The Spirit of Music (E. Dickinson)

The interior life is for all the one thing necessary—a life requiring as much development as the intellectual, the scientific, the artistic or the literary life, for it is a life lived in the depths of the soul—a life of the whole man, not merely of one or the other of his faculties. When one lives the truly interior life his influence upon his fellow men is greater, his social relations are happier, his intellectual life is suffused with spiritual treasures.

St. Augustine maintained that "Material goods unlike those of the spirit, cannot belong wholly and simultaneously to more than one person". The same house, the same land, the same machine, motor car or territory, cannot belong completely to several different people at once; but with spiritual treasures, the same can belong in their entirety to all men and at the same time to each. In fact, the more there are to enjoy them in common, the more completely are they possessed.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN (Continued).

### Part B.

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF ART.

### INTRODUCTION.

The criticism of Australian Art might be supported by a statement of the philosophy of art, for art revealing the essence of things has a philosophy, the same as literature; an underlying principle exists in the production of both. The philosophy of art is the general theory of the criticism of art and of aesthetic objects; it is the analysis of what art really is, or what "art for art's sake" means; in its scope it deals with such things as to whether art is subjective or objective; it discusses the time and age when people are sufficiently informed to appreciate art, or what relations it has with society, morality and religion, or how it can be oriented to suit circumstances and the theories of different centuries; what training an individual requires to understand the tastes of past civilisations or remote regions, and to discern (1), whether around him or in the past, the absoluteness of art and the relativity of taste.

The philosophy of art concerns itself with its exact definition, with the question of what is beauty and its study, since it deals with so many conflicting theories and so many varied considerations as supplied by philosophers, writers and aestheticians. The examination ranges over an extensive field, from the time of Plato to the *quod visum placet* of St Thomas, from the contributions of Kant and Coleridge to the speculations of Croce, or the transcendentalism of Maritain; from the inchoative mysticism of Abbé Henri Brémont, to the theories now prominent in the aesthetic world—the empathy of the Germans, the exemplarism, escapism or incantation of modern aestheticians, and immunitism, which says that the object of contemplation that pleases us in significant art, is the aesthetic act itself, our pleasure in the work of art.

Philosophy analyses, too, the types of beauty—the ontological, the aesthetic, and the merely sensual; it ascertains the qualities significant art must have to make it impressive and effective—Beauty (2) must be objective; the perception of the object must be intellectual, the perception must have an emotional effect on the beholder, while to secure aesthetic satisfaction the object must show perfection, purpose, intuition or a kind of knowledge akin to it. It furthermore must display

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(1) History of Art Criticism. (Lionello Venturi).

(2) The Nature of Art. (A Little).

vitality and provide an expression of idiosyncrasy, adding the charm of novelty and freshness to art. Philosophical art probes into the contribution of Aristotle: Catharsis, i.e., the effect of tragedy on an audience, and the experience of pitying unworthy objects, as in *Macbeth*; it also examines the claims of the psychoanalysts, and it takes account of the power of a great work (1) of art to awaken echoes or hint at invisible horizons, and by exploiting association to invoke a beauty not its own.

Philosophy (2) explores whether a work of art can be good artistically independently of its moral goodness or badness, and when a work of art is morally subversive; or why one book, or a particular picture, gives or refuses that inner delight, we know as the aesthetic, or why some writers with a felicitous grace of style, or with a literary vigour like Browning, or vivid picturesque values like Sir Walter Scott's or with exciting movements as demonstrated by Rolf Boldrewood, or why interesting short stories by Henry Lawson, merely glorify a good subject with mere emotion, instead of subjecting it to the refining fire of the aesthetic.

In a smaller way the philosophy of art analyses the claims of border-line arts like fancy-work, ornamentation, calligraphy, book-binding, wood-work, tapestry, pottery-work—all fields for aesthetic manifestations, even though in some cases a practical issue is the outcome, for beauty is independent of the various material forms employed in its presentation.

The theories dealing with the story of the aesthetic are also included in the philosophy of art, and it deals with its history from Plato's time to the year 1750, when A. G. Baumgarten published a work entitled *Aesthetica*, dealing with beauty. The history covers the progress of the aesthetic through the centuries down to the present period, and it notes and records the responses of the people of the different periods to its call. The ateleological theory of the aesthetic receives as careful a consideration as the experience of the aesthetic communion—the phase when one loses himself in the act of apprehension.

The philosophy of art weighs with care and interprets the results of experimental work in aesthetics even though the field in this case is limited, and must to a large extent rely on introspection as a method of study. In experimental work, however, the German aestheticians were supreme, and their work was responsible for a new career—*Kunstforscher*, the art expert and museum curator. The art-critic and the authorities in the art field are worthy of consideration as well as those who are recognised as the art consumers (3)—

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(1) *The Nature of Art.* (A. Little).

(2) *Ibid.*

(3) *The Philosophy of Art.* (C. J. Ducasse).

those who look at pictures, listen to music, read poetry, go to the ballet, etc., simply because such things make an aesthetic appeal to them and provide them with more or less aesthetic enjoyment. These consumers constitute the public which really matters in the sight of the muses, and also that of the truly creative and sincere artists. Sonatas are played for amateurs, i.e., lovers of music and of poetry. The dilettante—the man, who takes delight in works of art, is the one who, with the artist, counts the most.

Finally, the philosophy of art examines the reasons why art at times declines and why, when it begins to decline, the people who were interested in it allow their interest to fade away so rapidly.

This chapter would be unduly lengthened if all the aspects that the philosophy of art comprehends received attention, or if impressive arguments were set forth verifying or falsifying various theories held by the writers on aesthetics; some phases have been already alluded to; others will be dealt with in other sections of the thesis, but this chapter will confine itself to a short explanation of three articles:—The significance of the phrase "Art for Art's Sake"; the analysis of what art is and its aspects; some particulars of the artist who does the work, and the aim that animates him.

### FIRST ARTICLE.

Art (1) for Art's sake signifies art as dominant, a life devoted to art for the sake of art, the same as a man who devotes his life to the service of religion impelled by the call of a vocation, or the devotion of a social-worker who spends his life in the service of the poor. With art however, one's life is subordinated to the service of beauty—a sort of pilgrimage to the Land of Aesthetic Promise. The function assigned to art is not properly the creation of beauty: beauty is rather the sign that it has accomplished its function. "Beauty (2) is an eternal quality; it is found, whereas art is made. Beauty is the work of God; art is the work of man." The final word of an aesthetic judgment illustrates the understanding of what beauty is, for beauty (3) is the *bonum veri*, truth considered as a good by reason of the delight aroused by its vision.

If the phrase "Art for Art's Sake" has any meaning, it is this: that the artist having chosen a theme, thinks exclusively in working at it of technical dexterity, or the quality of beauty. Great statues, pictures, poems, music, etc., are really great because of something more, and that more is

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(1) Art for Art's Sake. (A. Guerard).

(2) Ibid.

(3) The Nature of Art. (A. Little).



their theme, their presentation of a noble portion of the human soul. Art exists for humanity, it transmutes thought and feeling into terms of beautiful forms. The final end of all art is the presentation of a spiritual content, for art is the language of the unconscious forces within us, of feelings and aspirations which cannot be expressed by words.

### THE SECOND ARTICLE.

There (1) are as many definitions of art as there are of philosophies, but it should be remembered that the word art applies at the same time to the creative urge, to the process through which that urge is manifested, to the material result of the process and to the appreciation of the result. All these are different phases or aspects of the same reality. They are, however, simply different points of view, and therefore different philosophical attitudes. For the poet, art means exploring and extending the bounds of reality; for the craftsman, it represents technique; for the dealer, the museum director, the historian, it denotes a collection of works or objects; for the general public it is a cultural delight or a weary boredom.

Art belongs to the higher forms of culture; it is vision or intuition. Croce denies that art is a physical fact. Children, he says, wish to touch the rainbow, so the human spirit admiring beautiful things, hastens spontaneously to trace out the reasons for them in external nature, and thus proves that it must think or believe that it should think, that certain colours are beautiful. "The whole (2) reality of art, is in the creative impulsē, in the motion of mind anterior to the deposited product, in the active voice and not in the past participle."

It is generally agreed that great works of art contain a wealth of profound thought, which may approximate almost to the whole content of a national culture. In inferior works of art, the thought-content is thin and meagre. Symonds holds that perfect works of art have but one quality. "The beautiful does not possess degrees, for there is no conceiving of a more beautiful, or an expression that is more expressive, or an adequate that is more adequate."

Art is akin to all thought and knowledge in that it is an understanding of relations. Nothing is intelligible until it has been grasped as form or structure; nothing is significant until it has been related to other things; science and art alike are an organisation of experience, both establish connections hitherto unperceived or unfelt. In that sense beauty is truth, and truth beauty; the end of each is the creation

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(1) Art for Art's Sake. (A. Guerard).

(2) Studies in Recent Aesthetic. (Symonds).

of a patterned whole. Works of art are never really static, nor is the appreciation of it wholly passive. Philosophy and criticism often distinguish aesthetic experience as "contemplative", and its peculiar pleasure as freedom from desire. Art is always establishing natural relations, realising natural rhythms and like literature, is a criticism of life, a force in social relations. It is for that reason an art. Literature, according to some critics, is the most exalted of the arts, while sculpture and painting are considered the most individualised.

Art (1), again, is akin to religion. Both are an attempt to express, not the things which are seen and temporal, but the things which are unseen and are eternal.

When a thing is judged to be beautiful, it is the accomplishment that is beautiful. The amateur artist worries himself with anxiety about creating beauty, but the genuine artist does not bother—he has something to express; to have it expressed is the sole business of his art. All he is anxious about is to achieve expression—complete, just and unequivocal. He knows if he can do that, his work cannot fail to be beautiful. The artist also attends faithfully and laboriously to the utterance which says what is in him, neither more nor less—and he attends to that without allowing his mind to be divided or his judgment to be prejudiced.

In art man creates the beautiful, and while art is the field of beauty par excellence, it is not wholly an imitation of nature, but the impregnation of percepts (nature) with ideas (concepts). The beauty of art, like the beauty of nature, consists in the fusion of the intellectual content with the perceptual field, and the greater the wealth and profundity of the intellectual content, the greater the value of the aesthetic experience. Every work of art is an individual object, thus sounds in music, words in poetry, colours in painting, stones in architecture, bronze in sculpture, etc., provide the perceptual field, thus indicating that art is concrete. The intellectual character of the content is less readily recognised. As art is an end in itself, it is independent of moral values—its function is not to teach morality, nor even indirectly to subserve to it, yet great works of art possess profound moral significance.

The beauty of a work of art justifies itself; its spirit, enlivening and animating, does not serve a purpose beyond mere expression. It is experience simply as such, valued for its own sake without reference to any judgment as to its truth, or reality, or moral goodness. A locomotive is a thing of beauty, but it is wholly designed to a practical end; the loco-

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(1) "Art and Religion." (P. Dearmer).

motive, therefore, is not a work of art, yet aestheticism was at the root of the endeavour to construct it. It is difficult to separate masterly workmanship from aesthetics—the one helps the other.

Art is the visible product of the imaginative vision vouchsafed to humanity for its pleasure and uplift; works of art are the greater by the measure which they supply of this vision. Each (1) art has its own medium—a medium especially fitted for one kind of communication. Each medium, moreover, says something that cannot be uttered as well, or as completely, in any other tongue. Each art speaks in an idiom that conveys what cannot be said in another language and yet remains the same. Croce (2) pointed out that “all art is a kind of language; it expresses, and so fixes and makes recognisable what before was vague, fleeting and merely felt.”

An artist, too, must make in his work his rhythm perceptible. What the rhythm is exactly, it is difficult to say; it eludes intellectual analysis, just as the pulse of life must be felt to be understood, yet its varied expressions may be observed and meditated on in art. “Art (3) ebbs and flows, grows and decays, leaps and struggles; it languishes when it is bound; it flourishes when it is free. When Art is good it speaks its language unmistakably.”

Professor Ducasse insists that the aim of the artist is simply to satisfy an instinctive passion for self-expression.

In a great work, in a drama or a novel, the author or artist, may hide or keep his own views out of the work—he simply represents the characters, he tells the story, everything happens as in real life; there are no comments, no “asides”, no sympathies expressed; the events take place. In this respect writers differ: One stresses everything, imagining that his readers have no intelligence; another merely states the bare facts, yet the facts he states are selected, and although an author appears to conceal his conceptions of men and women, yet they appear, if one has eyes to see and ears to hear. There is also a correlation of literature and art. The history of art constitutes a vivid enlightening commentary on the history of literature—a knowledge of one supplements the other and intensifies the response which an individual is able to give to both.

In addition to different definitions of art there are also several conceptions of it. (4) The hedonistic is one, the moralistic another, the conceptualistic a third, and the purely physical

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- (1) “The Sudden Rose.” (Blanche Kelly).
  - (2) “The Philosophy of Benedetto Croce.” (Carr).
  - (3) “The Sculpture of Today.” (Kinton Parkes).
  - (4) “The Philosophy of Art”

attitude, a fourth. Some ask if art consists solely of the content, or solely of the form, or does it consist of content and form together. It is held by some authorities that art is all in the content, while again others claim that content is indifferent, and that it is simply a peg or hook from which beautiful forms are suspended which alone satisfy the aesthetic spirit. G. L. Raymond (1) insisted that the foundations of art rest in the realms both of science and of religion—the superstructure is the bridge between them.

Some have attributed aesthetic results to the sub-conscious mind e.g. G. W. Leibnitz and E. S. Dallas (2). The poet, F. Von Schiller, attributed it to the play-impulse or to inspiration. "Beauty is the result of harmony of effects—physical and mental. The most successful art is that which produces the most effect, and nothing can be effective unless it is to some extent objective, i.e., unless it is construed in such a way as to influence those outside of itself." Art (3) too, provides people with intuitions; it has a cultural function, it establishes a feeling for the past; from a practical point of view it affects conduct, and accomplishes something of the same purpose as religion, in creating a harmony between man and his environment.

A work of art has two major aspects to be kept in mind. On the one hand it has an "Aesthetic surface," which is the object of immediate aesthetic response, and the occasion of aesthetic delight, but a work of art is also a vehicle of communication, for art is the expression, through beauty, or artistic form of the artist's interpretation of some aspect of human experience, or of the world which constitutes man's environment. It is never possible to eliminate absolutely the personality of the individual contemplating a work of art. As he sees it only through his own lens, he is limited by his capacity, and the work for him becomes distorted, if his outlook is distorted. Clive Bell points out that a man may have an intellect as keen, as a drill, with the best education in the world; he may even have an interest in art, literature and aesthetics, and yet not know a work of art from a hand-saw.

Art, too, has many forms. In addition to the definitions already given it may be useful, mechanical, and applied. The higher arts as already indicated represent music, poetry, painting, sculpture, and architecture since they express thought and feeling; but elocution, oratory, dancing, pantomime, dramatics, decorating and landscape-gardening perhaps figure under the minor arts and are grouped under the heading of utilitarian

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(1) Comparative Aesthetics. (G. L. Raymond)

(2) The Gay Science. (E. S. Dallas).

(3) The Analysis of Art. (De W. H. Parker).

and applied. The arts (1) of painting, sculpture, literature, drama, belong to the sphere of imagination, but not music, architecture and dancing, for there is no make-believe about the architect, the dance or the musician.

The vitality of an art form is seen in the willingness of the artist to be engrossed in the complex and the intense, and it is in that spirit that the expression of beauty is approached, which is the main business of art. In the higher forms of art the expressions of joy, vision and ecstasy manifest themselves, but vision is the main thing that distinguishes the golden ages of art.

Art is a means of establishing relations with personalities not otherwise accessible. The gulf which separates artistic people today from ancient people, from savages or enemies, or those of another sex, from the young or the very old, is bridged by art, hence its educative value. Art is a social activity, and it is of special necessity to modern life. "Health (2), leisure, and comfort are true human needs, and in every period have been enjoyed by people, but the object of the possession has not yet led to a movement like a religious or a philosophical revival from which has emanated a sustained joy and inspiring hopefulness of universal application." Every age has sought to interpret art and every generation has its modernists, but artists today find themselves without a common or universal ideal welded into their present form.

Some maintain that a work of art can be appreciated only as a whole, but the Elgin Marbles is surely an exception to such an idea. The frescos of the Sistine Chapel cannot be all seen as a whole; the visitor to the Blue Mountains realises that the beauty he observes is clearly not the whole panorama of beauty; it is not possible for him to behold more than a certain section at a time, but the very nature (3) of art precludes the sectioning of its substance. "Art is a spirit; spirit is single and indivisible".

Sometimes there is a tendency in the minds of the art-conscious to confuse the various arts, to suppose that the effects of one art can be produced in another. Occasionally it has been thought that the effects of a landscape as presented in painting can be produced in words, or demonstrated in musical notes. From this notion sprang the long description of places or things that were once the fashion in prose and verse. From this confusion also sprang the literary painting—the painting which tried to produce the effect of a story or of a

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(1) The Analysis of Art. (De W. H. Parker).

(2) The Meaning and purpose of Art. (A. R. Howell).

(3) Studies in Recent Aesthetic. (Katherine Gilbert).

poem. Some believed they could achieve in literature especially in poetry, the effects of music but the effort has never been too successful.

### THE THIRD ARTICLE.

The third of the analysis of philosophy of art deals with the artist and the aim that absorbs his endeavours. The artist does not wish art to be merely a decoration for walls, or a method of securing easy pleasure for its enthusiasts, or a vested interest for a few, or an object of vanity for some isolated aesthetes, located in their ivory tower. The poet builds up his ideal world in his verses; the prose writer visualises a commonwealth rich in possibility; Christian ideals give rise to Gothic architecture; the artist, too, embodies his views of life, of things, of people, etc., in his art, but in such a subtle way that the analysis to seize them becomes lost; they exist, but they can only be felt rather than observed.

Man surrounded by mortality craves for more than one life. Whether he be a specialist or a layman, whether he possesses a vast amount of critical knowledge or not concerning artistic matters, the essential requirement in each case is the experience of the work of art. A work (1) of art is a world of itself complete, self-contained, and different from the world the individual lives in. The artist surrenders himself to the reality of his creed; the spectator, too, yields himself up to its strangeness. The work of art is not meant to be a corroboration of one's actual sense of experience, but an expansion of it, a sudden discovery of new properties in human existence. The spectator must enter into the work of art if a true aesthetic experience is to take place.

The scientist explores into the provinces of reality; the philosopher dips into the regions of the mind, but the artist deals with the resources of his medium. The inadequate (2) artist puts something into his art, but the adequate one knows how to get something out of it. The painter "sees" things with eyes different from the ordinary man's, because he sees through the progressive practice of his art. It is not the eye of the painter which dictates to his hand; rather it is his hands which guide and educate his eye. As the eye is trained by the hand, so the mind is patterned by the sense of form. The real artist proceeds not from feeling to form, but from form to thought and passion. There is no short cut to artistic achievement, not even an intellectual one; the way is long, the apprenticeship arduous.

The artist's approach to reality unlike that of the scientist, is essentially evaluative. He is always concerned with the

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(1) The Intention of the Artist. (A. Centeno).

(2) Lessing's Laokoön.

significance of his subject matter—man, and the meaning of human experience. His approach to reality is never cold, impersonal, and dispassionate, but exhibits unusual sympathetic insight. The artist is distinguished from other men by his pre-eminent ability to discern, with imaginative power, what the average man apprehends only feebly and confusedly. The arts are therefore the most effective vehicle at man's disposal for the apprehension and communication of whatever endows human experience with significance.

The artist has this role of individuality—his approach to life and reality is always a highly individualistic approach. Every (1) artist, as John Ruskin said, must always have two great and distinct ends in view: "to induce in the first place the spectator's mind, the faithful conception of any natural object whatsoever; secondly, to guide the spectator's mind to those objects most worthy of its contemplation, and to inform him of those thoughts and feelings with which these were regarded by the artist himself."

In the selection of the means (2), no artist, whether he works with his pen, or his brush, or fingers at the musical keyboard, succeeds in his expression unless he knows the whole range of devices which have proved themselves appropriate and serviceable in the past. When the artist has a knowledge of the devices, he is the better able to achieve expression of his experience. He becomes an artist when he begins to publish his experiences; consequently, he requires the public just as certainly as the public requires the artist. Take away the audience and you take away the artist's function. Methods (3) and media change, aims and ideals alter, the spirit of the age, race and environment, influence artistic work, but behind everything is the spirit of the man himself, the personality of the artist. The artist, as a human being, conveys his message to other human beings, his aim being to spiritualise men. Ruskin maintained in his Oxford lectures that Fine Art had three functions—Enforcing the religious sentiments of men, Perfecting their aesthetic state, and Doing them material service. The artist is a social leader, a torch bearer in aesthetic culture and ideals.

Expressing an opinion is not expressing an experience, and all arts, whatever the medium of their techniques, begin in the same kind of experience, namely, aestheticism, and end in the same kind of specialisation—the beauty of the whole expression. The work of art that moves one to admiration sometimes evokes no response in another; what arouses the enthusiasm of one generation leaves another indifferent; the list of the best books,

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(1) Modern Painters, Part 4, Sec. 1, Chapter 1.

(2) "Art and Religion." (P. Dearmer).

(3) "The Artist and His Public." (Eric Newton).

or the best pictures, of one century differs considerably from the list of a later century.

(1) The artist while endeavouring to say something to his audience makes use of lights, darks, colours, masses, symbols, spots and empty spaces. The use and effect of such materials cause an emotion in the mind of the spectator and give rise to an appreciation. If the result is an appreciation of the beauty that emerges, then it is known as an aesthetic appreciation, since aesthetic ideas and critical judgments commingle in the verdict given on the artistic work observed.

The aesthetic (2) sense that results in the appreciation manifests varying degrees of development sensitive to the quality of beauty, and to the corresponding aesthetic emotion which is moved by this quality, and such aesthetic reaches its highest level, when philosophical culture is pronounced, and the intuitive experience of art is present.

It frequently happens that an aesthetic appreciation produces definite bodily changes in an individual, just as the suddenness and shock of "bad news", is often known to disturb a person's bodily functions, or even to cause ill-health. A. E. Bailey agrees with the above statement: "Aesthetic (3) appreciation is rooted in emotion, which is always correlated with bodily changes, muscular tensions, visceral motions and even visible movements and postures."

Artistic critics, however, vary in their judgments; experts often fail to agree in deciding issues. Schools of thought succeed one another, and verdicts of one generation, relative to art differ from those of another. Ideas in all fields, including that of the arts, alter rapidly and radically in the course of time, and in recent years in particular, due to the advance of science. Artists, too, it has been noted produce less, as in nature, when the same sort of crop is too often sown. Today, perhaps, the tendency is to inter-relate the arts, to make one art merge into another almost imperceptibly, like the colours of a rainbow.

If to those of riper years and varied tastes, an art may seem poor, or a poem mediocre, still, it does not always follow that the art was poor, or that the poem was inferior. Accepted models of the past, or the consensus of experts, are only general guides—they must not be regarded as final courts of appeal. Ideals of beauty change from generation to generation. Not all those who produced works of art in the past find favour with those who make the creations of modern times. Love is governed by no established principles; it obeys no universal rules; it knows no objective standards. We can give no account

(1) Five Arts. (F. E. Halliday).

(2) The History of Art. (Lionello Venturi).

(3) Art and Character. (A. E. Bailey)



of the characteristics common to all that is lovable, nor can we to all that is beautiful. What each man finds most lovable he loves, and in the same way man finds most beautiful what he most deeply admires, and that which appeals most to his aesthetic taste is for him a criterion of what is true and beautiful. This idea seems to harmonise with Croce's theory that Beauty is expression. "Art (1) is intuition involving intuitive knowledge with aesthetic activity."

Although Eric Gill says the works of men reflect and are the product of their religion and philosophy, still the best art has always a profound thought behind it independent of such features, consequently it is impossible to understand the work of a great painter, or a great poet for that matter unless sufficient study is given to the meaning. Art reigns in the kingdom of feeling but no standard of appraisal arises until feeling is controlled by judgment. "To (3) rejoice or suffer with the human lot which a work of art may incidentally suggest or present to us, is a very different thing from the true artistic pleasure. Occupation with the human element of the work is essentially incompatible with pure aesthetic fruition." The picture that awakens the significance of death, sorrow, compunction, etc., falls below the high function of art—the tragedy of loss, the humility of surrender, the consequences of failure, and all such matters appealing to the feeling—all distract from the aesthetic pleasure. Feelings must be subordinated to the major emotion of aesthetic satisfaction, while the power and beauty of the whole composition must induce a consciousness of unity which contains within itself the moral element. When Beauty is experienced a region is entered in which the tasks and judgments of the moral life have ceased for the time being to concern people.

Some pictures like an elixir seem to represent all beauty or all wisdom, or all religion, or all art, but according to Wyck Brooks, all values have in the general experience of the race sprung, if not from the soil, at least from man rooted in the soil. "A (2) rootless people cannot endure for ever, and we shall pay in the end for our superficiality in ways more terrible than we can yet conceive."

A library of philosophical works does not make a philosopher; skilled fingers are not identical with music; finely formed seeds do not always produce beautiful flowers; ideal country sights need not necessarily find the artist; but if a man loves art, all things upon which art throws its light become of commanding interest to him. He endeavours to explore its traditions; he finds pleasure in reflecting upon its problems, and the greater the work of art, the more universal will he recognise its expressed

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(1) *La Deshumanizacion del Arte.* (Senor Ortega).

(2) *Sketches in Criticism.* (Van Wyck Brooks).

(3) *Das Wesender Kunst.* (Lange)

insights, and the more aesthetic enjoyment will he receive. Even though Lange maintains "that the aesthetic enjoyment which a work of art, as a work of art, affords is dependent neither upon the quality of its content, nor upon its formal nature, but . . . rests entirely upon the strength and vividness of the allusion to which the artist brings us through his art."

(1) A. E. Bailey in his lecture on the antiquity and universality of the arts mentioned that in 1895, he entered a room in Dresden, where Raphael's Sistine Madonna was hung. Before it a crowd sat in silence with eyes fastened upon the picture—one that suggested the mystery of motherhood. To understand such a picture was to have a religious experience. In 1908, 1920, and 1927, he visited Dresden again. The crowd was a different one for each visit, but it was still absorbed in contemplating the picture before it. Bailey maintained that this scene was an illustration of the perpetual ministry of religious art to the human spirit.

Julian Ashton once remarked that his main object in life was to teach his students to see beauty and to feel it. (2) "For thirty years and more I have written and talked that the people might learn to love and understand beautiful works." The Australian people stimulated by such leaders as Ashton, and scores of others in the artistic line, do not remain blind to art with its variety of interests, its diversity of material, and to the light it reflects on history and letters—for true art is a study containing all the elements of culture, and aesthetics is its *fine fleur*.

Deeply entrenched in man is the aspect (3) of art value: the quest for perfection. Practically considered it is simply a striving for approximation to complete unity, assuming that unity, harmony and fitness are the supreme attributes of a good art—the masterpiece. In addition to the creation of pure artistic works, the embellishment of leisure, the ornamentation of homes, the study of history, poetry, literature, philosophy, etc., have all aesthetic value. The cultivation of art value, or "Fine Art", is regarded as the insignia of an intellectual aristocracy—it produces, as Sir Rupert Parry said in his address to the students of the Royal College, the outlook and result that make the happiest people.

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- (1) The Arts and Religion—The Ayer Lectures. (A. E. Bailey).
  - (2) Manuscripts No. 4. (Library, Geelong).
  - (3) Art in Human Affairs. (N. C. Meir).

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN (Continued).

### Part C.

#### THE PHILOSOPHY OF POETRY.

Writers have established a philosophy of literature, of art and of life, but when it comes to lay the foundations for a philosophy of poetry, difficulties arise, opinions vary and authorities submit theories that at most are interesting but do not convince. No one, as yet has supplied a definition for poetry that is quite satisfactory. Aristotle discussed the matter in his day; Plotinus with his fusion of religion, ethics and metaphysics analysed the proposition; Horace with his *curiosa felicitas* illustrated the charms of poetry; critics like Boileau, Dryden, Coleridge and Saint Beuve; poets like Shelley, Wordsworth, Paul Valéry, Matthew Arnold, W. B. Yeats, T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound treated (1) of the nature of poetry but did not explain the poetic element

All of the above elucidated the structure of poetry; they dealt with its diction, alluded to its frequent obscurity, enunciated certain general ideas, investigated the poetic experience and showed how the mind rises above the realm of existence to the realm of essence—an achievement due to intellectual vision, but for the most part all these played only the philosopher's part, they did not throw light on the poetic element.

New standards and new techniques are being constantly introduced into the structure of poetry. What satisfied one generation does not satisfy a succeeding one. Poetry lives by style; once a style has been perfected it is immediately thrown aside; new circumstances arise that call for a changed poetical outlook.

If the quandary is to get to the meaning and definition of poetry, the philosophy of it is still more formidable. The task that remains for people is to reduce the obscurity which envelops it. Baudelaire made headway in his effort to find a solution to the difficulty, so did Magnin and Arnold, both of whom isolated the poetic fact, and attached themselves to it to describe it. A. C. Bradley, Professor of Poetry at Oxford, regarded Pure Poetry as an abstraction, while A. Quiller-Couch in his analysis of it deferred even to the Ballad as of all forms of poetry the most mysterious and singular: "Singular in its nature, mysterious in its origin and history." The study of poetry and the nature of its criticism from the time of Chaucer, and even earlier than that period, down to the present day have occupied the minds of scholars, critics, and poets.

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(1) *Collected Essays in Literary Criticism.* (H. Read).

Some tired of (1) abstractions turned to nature for consolation and refreshment; some stressed the scientific side of literature, others the symbolistic, others the appreciation of the aesthetic, but all efforts to solve the mystery of poetry meet with failure.

In the Middle Ages, even in Milton's time, the Christian cosmogony explained poetry as it explained everything else. In the course of time "the fabric of the Christian (2) beliefs became undermined, and feeling a need for a new gospel to take its place poets and writers found in the Beautiful something which unified their activities and gave a goal to their work."

In recent times, i.e., from 1850, movements like symbolism, mysticism, aesthetic contemplation and modern poetry, were looked upon as attempts to make a religion out of the creative process which lies behind poetry. (3) Henri Bremond said that poetry was like prayer; the post-symbolists felt that the poet was in touch with some superior order of things, and that his art is the ritual by which this is brought down to men. Yeats and his spiritualism, Blok and his spirit of music, Rilke and his theory of death, etc., all indicated that they regarded poetry as being mysterious, that a mystery existed somewhere. Paul Valéry (né 1871) accepted the mystery, but erected no theory on it.

Aristotle, Plotinus, Lamotte and others maintained that poetry was not rational; to critics and students it is not a myth; to the chosen elect it is a fact with a worthy message to the general life of society, but to the great public, poetry (4) is but a drawing-room game for wasted hours. Some writers assert that poetic experience is an enlightenment of the mystical order, and it is from the mystic that we can learn to understand the poet; the poet is really an intermediary between the mystic and the ordinary people. "While (5) we have mystics among us death for literature is impossible . . . mysticism witnesses and guarantees that until the soul of man be dust literature shall live."

Different poets during the centuries added various features to the poetic scheme and to the poetic method. Each century made its contribution; each age was reflected in its literature; each period had its philosophy, its scale of values. Nationality played a part in the literary make-up of a nation's mentality; the effect of religion on literature was easily traceable; while heredity and environment also affected contemporary thought. The Renaissance philosophy created a thirst

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(1) Studies in Literature. (A. Quiller-Couch). Page 22.

(2) The Heritage of Symbolism. (C. M. Bouvra).

(3) Prayer and Poetry. (Henri Bremond).

(4) Walter Bagehot.

(5) Studies in Literature. (A. Quiller-Couch).

had a great partiality for the musical element in poetry; their chief task being to take back from music what the poets had lost to it. The Symbolist Movement and the aesthetic approach to life, it might be stated here, are faced with the danger that by concentrating too keenly on the music of words, and on beautiful objects, a taste for the ordinary common things of life is lost; pain and disgust for them may be the outcome—a result that leads a person on to a passive melancholy.

While it is recognised that there is something intangible, a mystery in poetry, a feeling has existed during the centuries that one day its secret would yield to scientific analysis. The mystery, today, has veered from the poem to the poet, how the poet's life has passed into his poem. If a poem is read, the reader associates himself with the poet, he shares his gift, there is an interchange of psychical currents; the less that is seen of the reader's deeper soul, the more is seen of the poet's soul. The poet (1) is a seer, he sees what the mystic sees, his rhythms breathe an atmosphere of ethereal rarity and loveliness. The poetic mind is in sensitive response to a vast sphere of being for poetry is a state of vision. The poetic process is elusive, its wings are everywhere fluttering for truth. It is the divinity in poetry, according to Shelley, that raises one's spirit, that makes poetry build up the beautiful.

No poet who composes knows exactly what he proposes to say. A man might say that he is going to write a letter, or paint a picture of the valley before him, or compose a speech, but to write a poem is a different matter. With each effort made to produce the poem, the meaning changes and grows richer. Chance also plays a part in its composition, but inspiration comes gradually as one line is added to another; occasionally there is a check to the work, but each check is profitable. Genius (2) is often intermittent, and although a poet may blossom out in his adolescence and early manhood, yet with advancing years he often withers away and becomes dull. Inspiration works fitfully, and occasionally at intervals of many years—e.g. Milton ceased writing poetry for twenty-five years; Wordsworth for a time poured out his richness, and then lapsed into poverty. Matthew Arnold could not repeat the success he scored with *Sohrab and Rustum* in *Balder Dead*—both episodes.

Shelley believed that inspiration comes before everything. A foreign (3) influence seizes hold of the poet, who can neither understand nor control it; a divine power penetrates him and obliges him to produce certain images of perfection by which he tries to save from the gulf of nothingness which waits for them, these visits of God to man. This is poetry.

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(1) Poetry of the Invisible. (S. M. Iman).

(2) Collected Essays on Literary Criticism. (H. Read).

(3) Prayer and Poetry. (Henri Bremond)

The poet cannot (1) explain himself, he cannot even defend himself. The man who is wise, may not be able to sing, and the one who sings is not always wise. The poet, although he may not have wisdom, is often clothed with a divine self—his is a royal gift. Poetry then is a "mystery" with a charm depending on qualities that definitions will not satisfy, nor regulations confine. All the rules and prescriptions set down by man fail to identify poetic knowledge with what is rational, and do not succeed in upsetting the traditional view that the poet is inspired. Classicism began the regulations for poetry. A slow evolution led to romanticism—a movement which took poetry seriously as a free and splendid gift, lifting the poet above himself for his own and the greater good of everyone else. Romanticism also gives an aesthetic which is lyrical, or doctrinal, or both lyrical and doctrinal. Aesthetic in relation to poetry is the knowledge of all the phenomena experienced by the soul in the poetic state.

(2) The poet qua poet can do nothing but speak, that is his glory and his weakness; he receives a treasure by the magic of words, that is his glory. In his haste to exploit and transmit the treasure, he handles it badly, superficially; that is his weakness. Vinet says that it looks as if poets have been sent to speak and not to be. They are prophets without responsibility, they can say anything, and no matter how beautiful their visions are, no one will take them for saints. Bernard O'Dowd (3) in his poem "The Poet" clearly indicates the poet's power:—"They tell you the poet is useless and empty the sound of his lyre, That science has made him a phantom, and thinned to a shadow his fire:

Yet reformer has never demolished a dungeon or den of the foe  
But the flame of the soul of a poet pulsed in every blow."  
By poetry and by penetrating beyond it, writes Baudelaire, by music and by penetrating beyond it, the soul catches a glimpse of the splendour on the other side of the grave: and when an exquisite poem brings tears to the eyes, these tears are no proof of excessive pleasure.

The poet, it is felt, can do something that other men cannot do. Poetry for the poet is a fundamental power; it is not only a mode of art, but also a mode of philosophy. Poetry (4) is not deliberately didactic; its philosophy is implicit rather than explicit. Vaticination is a quality of all the higher poets, for poetry is the finer spirit of all knowledge. Poetry and philosophy are similar in their pursuit of the ultimate values—beauty, truth and goodness. Poetry is a creative philosophy;

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(1) Literary Craftsmanship and Appreciation. (R. Fuller).

(2) "Esprit de Visret." (Astier).

(3) "The Poet." (Bernard O'Dowd).

(4) The Philosophy of English Literature. (J. I. Bryan).

what the imagination loves as poetry, reason loves as philosophy. All art is an attempt to create life over again, but the art of poetry goes further than other arts and seeks a transformation of life. When the poetry implies a dominant thought or story, the story is always a means to an end, a vehicle for conveying thought or philosophy; the story reveals the author's art, but the matter involves philosophy.

(1) God does not give himself immediately to the poets; he requires an apprenticeship, severe and prolonged in most cases, and then only through the mystic way, does he reveal Himself when the poet is ready and prepared. The phrases—inspiration, secret influence of Heaven, "dic mihi, musa," have no meaning unless a mystical character is attached to poetry. Mystics are not purely intellectuals like the philosophic poets; their state is more of the passive type, they live rather in the object they love; they see into the life of things; they feel the presence of God; they are wholly influenced by His presence. People who have never seen the beauties of the material world, or who have never known them cannot speak of them with truth and with a feeling of reality—e.g. the blind people. Those who have never practised noble conduct, or who have never cared for noble things, should not find fault with those whose whole life is a practice of altruism. Mysticism has no meaning for the one who knows nothing about it, but a mystic is a sane person; he is found where peace and order prevail; he has his specific activity; it is possible that he knows more about the peak of his spirit, the secret depths of his soul than any one else.

The poetic style may show nobility, finesse, delicacy, vivacity of expression, etc., but those qualities alone do not make poetry, something else is needed to animate the whole, but what is that something which distinguishes verse from prose? That "something" presents the difficulty and the theories of eminent poets like Lamotte (2), Edgar Poe, Mallarmé, Baudelaire, Ducerseau, Shelley, Wordsworth, Keats, etc., are unable to satisfy us with their solutions. For Shelley poetry is a creation, a sort of revelation, but he and most of the others play only a philosopher's part when they discuss the essence of poetry—a purely rational problem. Then the mystical theory of poetry has been advanced, for poetry and mysticism have much in common, in fact, it is from the mystic that we can learn to understand the poet. Mysticism, however, while throwing light on the poetic gift—corresponding (3) in the natural order to what the prophetic gift stands for in the supernatural, fails to explain

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(1) Prayer and Poetry. (Henri Bremond).

(2) Prayer and Poetry. (Henri Bremond).

(3) Ibid.

the miracle of poetry, fails also to show how the poet is a voice—*os magna sonaturum*—and likewise fails to assign reasons for the magic of verse and the acceptance of the ideal aesthetic that poetry demands.

The symbolists had a clear view of what poetry ought to be. Although they modified it by degrees, still they set great value on its mystical grandeur, its supreme aloofness, its element of music.. Too much concentration on such points led to their missing those things that ordinary poets seized on, i.e. creation of poetry from the most ordinary words and things of life. Their poetry reflects a hieratic quality, each line has its proper strength, each word does its right work. Their poetry was their ideal, they shrank from the coarse impacts of reality.

Mr. Middleton Murry in order to explain more fully his philosophy of poetry had recourse to the Catholic mystics—St. Teresa, St. John of the Cross, St. Francis of Sales, etc., and he showed, as is the case with the mystics, how God gives us an experimental, intellectual knowledge of His presence, the direct feeling of His presence; or the intuition of God as present to our souls, or to the soul of the mystic.

Poetic experience is a gift of God, a grace, an activity essentially directed towards prayer. The specific quality of poetic experience is to be communicable; the contemplatives (1) or mystics on the other hand keep the secrets of the king to themselves. What the poet teaches us, or says in his own language, can be translated into another language, but the **poetical** element in a poem remains untranslatable. I can translate Horace and communicate the ideas to another, but Horace translated is no longer Horace. The same is true of *Athalie* turned into English, or *Hamlet* rewritten and explained. The poet thus differs from the mystic, the orator, or the business man. Change the poetic form, you may (2) get the heart of the poet but not his voice.

Classical aesthetics kept poetry and faith in water-tight compartments; romanticism tried to find in the nature of man, in his longings, aspirations, uncertainties and his imaginative life a basis for a new set of sustaining beliefs; symbolism and mysticism fail to explain the philosophy of poetry—they deal only with its experiences, not its essence. Henri Bremond in his book "Prayer and Poetry", sought a solution for the philosophy of poetry, and he submitted to his readers his thesis—Catharsis, as the solution for the "something". Catharsis, he says, is the passage from the rational to real and poetic knowledge. All poetic experience is Catharsis—a word borrowed

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(1) Poetry and Prayer. (H. Bremond).

(2) George Eliot.



by Aristotle from the lexicon of medicine. Catharsis acts on the deeper self beyond the surface zone. If Aristotle had known better, he would not have reserved to tragedy alone the purifying, simplifying and enriching action of the Catharsis, for all poetic experience is Catharsis. No matter how disinclined we are to admit it, we seem naturally to feel that the poet is a professor who speaks in verses—a professor of morals. The Catharsis is really a lesson in morals, disguised perhaps, but definitely addressed to our surface faculties.

"The Catharsis (1) which distinguishes the poet from others, the Catharsis which is poetry itself, possesses the quality of wishing to communicate itself, using the intermediary of words. The part of a poem which so fills us with its beauty or its meaning that we find it almost impossible to convey to others what we feel and mean, is the Catharsis. It opens also the gates of the deeper soul; it never invites us to evil; it awakens in us the desire to do good, as music tends to soothe our anger, or 'as the harp of David restored calm to the soul of Saul'."

We find wonderful examples of the Catharsis in Dante, Shakespeare and Keats. In "The Ode to a Nightingale" there are some beautiful lines, e.g. "The voice I hear this passing night . . . etc." In this passage not only is there beauty, but intensity and harmonious choice of words. There is also a touch of realism. "Forlorn! the very word is like a bell." The word, "forlorn" is an untranslatable word, yet it is full of significance. The poetic experience, that these lines provide for the appreciator, illustrate an excellent example of Catharsis.

There are many instances of Catharsis in the Australian poets. It has been already remarked that mysticism is apparent with a number of the Australian poets, but, it is not the poet who illuminates the mystery of the mystics; it is the mystic who helps to penetrate the mystery of the poet. The poem "Dolce Far Niente" by A. G. Steven is an excellent example of Catharsis. The first verse is as follows:—

"How wholly sweet beside this sunlit flow  
Of choric water, to recline at ease,  
And drink the bowl of beauty to the lees,  
Heedless of all but of the dreams which grow!  
Faintly we hear the distant cattle low,  
Whilst thro' the rippling greenery of the trees.  
Lulled by the drowsy murmurings of bees,  
We see the moted sunbeams come and go."

Various pictures are here suggested—pictures of one reclining, but absorbed in the beauty around—dead to the world but taken up with his inward happiness and contentment. The distant call of cattle, the breeze blowing among the trees.

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(1) "Prayer and Poetry." (Henri Bremond).

the murmurings of bees, the dancing sunbeams observed—all are noted even though the individual concerned is in a sort of trance—he is experiencing a Catharsis. "Failure", by Furnley Maurice or "Over the Range" by A. B. Paterson are other examples by Australian poets.

Henri Bremond's thesis of Catharsis is all very interesting and doubtless a valuable contribution to the solution of the poetic problem but it seems to side-track the issue rather than solve it. Catharsis is according to him a poetic experience, and he uses the term as meaning the same as a religious experience, or a musical experience, but the matter is an experience, a sort of ecstasy, a carrying away of the soul, but the problem to be solved was:—What is that animating something which distinguishes verse from prose? The words of poetry are animated by something:—What is that something? Bremond at most has thrown some light on the problem. but the philosophy of poetry—the long history of the metaphysics of its art still awaits solution.

Prose writers produce whole treatises on what poetry can do but the poet (1) in a few lines simplifies the matter thus:—

"Not a maxim has needled through time, but a poet had feathered its shaft,

Not a law is a boon to the people but he has directed its draft."  
Thus prose may put the matter one way, poetry has its own way; and whatever the poet writes, *res ipsa loquitur*. but what is that animating "something" which makes the difference?

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(1) "The Poet." (Bernard O'Dowd).

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN.

### SECTION TWO

#### THE FUTURE.

#### THE INTRODUCTION.

As Australia is a democratic country with ideals to be realised and a social philosophy to further such ideals, it will not be unwise to take a peep into the future and to picture mentally what in all probability will happen in the Commonwealth. No one is quite reconciled to things as they exist at present, and such dissatisfaction is a healthy sign. If complacency were indulged in because of the excellence of the Australian social philosophy; if absolute satisfaction were expressed with its economic system; if its educational and artistic aims and the development of adult education etc., represented everything that was perfect then little progress would be made in the Commonwealth. When things are considered faulty, improvement may be expected; besides, life is not static. changes occur, and what satisfied a past generation fails to find favour with people of a later period and so on.

Each age or each generation seems to take its colour from the dominant pre-occupation of the most active minds in the community. The quiet growth of the natural sciences in recent years has coloured the whole mentality of the modern man. The rapid progress in technology or applied science has changed considerably the conditions of social life, while the growth of nationalism brings far less freedom to the many in the 20th century than during the 19th century. The present day intellectual dissatisfaction with intellect may be observed in every graduate school, in every department of thought and philosophy, while the secularisation of the arts almost means their eclipse. The men of letters have become laymen, the idyllic life has been forsaken for the practical one, the muse for the social, the graces and arts for the mechanical contrivances so much in evidence today.

Since the men of letters have become laymen and the secularisation of art more noticeable with the progress of time, it seems to explain to some extent the quality of contemporary literature,—a quality that lacks form and a high literary standard. (1) Since the time of William Dilthen, the German philosopher, who occupied the chair in philosophy in Berlin (1882-1911), a new interpretation of the subtle process called the history of ideas, the royal march of human thinking, or the new great idea in which a man is beginning to abide, insists

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(1) Concord and Liberty. (Jose Ortega and Gasset).

that the idea of life demands a new intellectual technique for detecting reality sub specie instantis.

According to Baudelaire, every work of art, every great poem, naturally suggests some kind of moral, but it is the part of the reader to discover this moral, but he is only able to discover it, if he is capable of receiving it, and of profiting by it. How can a man discover the moral, when he is too preoccupied with "getting (1) and spending and laying waste his powers"—too taken up with worldly pursuits and attractions!

### THE AUSTRALIAN FUTURE.

In this chapter on the future, it is permitted to look forward and to hope that certain things will improve in the commonwealth, and that other things will happen to benefit it. No country is so admirable, no people are so perfect that improvements in culture, education, art and life, are not possible. The writer foresees that the years to come will utilise more effectively the art of reading as a means for the formation of conduct and character, that education will be used more widely as the method to provide weapons and tools in the contest of life; the insistence on training in the art of appreciation as a valuable help in making the poetic and literary voices of Australia audible; (3) the suspension of judgment in works of art till the aesthetic perception has been trained, and a submission of the intellect in the early stages of its schooling to the judgment of the world, on works of art, deemed most worthy of admiration.

"Leave all and follow me" makes a success of the religious life; the same holds true for the arts and philosophy. The repudiation of this counsel of perfection has resulted in the externalisation of Australian culture. "The world (2) is too much with us" said Wordsworth in an admirable sonnet, and it is possible he had in his mind the writer, the artist and the philosophic student.

The writer also foresees the part the Australian universities will play in developing public taste and appreciation, as the initial stage to self-realisation and self-expression; that the aesthetic will become a sure basis of discipline and morality; that the art of conversation will be better developed, so that cultured speech will enable one to talk in a way that makes conversation delightful to hear, and the participation in it an aesthetic joy; and that Australians generally will be prouder of their country and will do all within their power to further its diversified interests, its culture, and its aesthetic.

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(1) Sonnet. (Wordsworth).

(2) Ibid.

(3) The Philosophy of the Beautiful. (Wm. Knight).

If Australia is to progress as a nation, it must have an educated and enlightened people, and it must place culture above the more material things of life. Men and women possessing nobility of character and high ideals make a country respected and honoured. Character and ideals cannot be purchased with money, nor can material wealth in any way compare with them. An aristocracy of culture-enlightened, reasonable, and benevolent, able to counteract the baneful influence of an authority founded on wealth and commerce, is what a country needs. Real culture is never out of place; it befits alike the poor and the wealthy, the servant of business and the professional man; it refines and uplifts, and brings one more into conformity with the designs of his creation.

The standard of culture is an important clue to the aesthetic of a society. When sport is over-developed, when newspaper reading is the only spiritual nourishment possible, when sociological changes fail to elevate the public taste, when intellectual restraints are no longer felt, then it is that decadence sets in and the aesthetic invariably falls. The one-time theological studies, the cult of classic literature, the pursuit of logic as a study and the things that impregnated the air with their disciplinary influences, are no longer in use, and to replace them and maintain the high standard of our aesthetic, literature, art, music, philosophy and architecture replace the old-time studies, and it is possible that such studies are not yet fully utilised as media for the development of a country's aesthetic.

Most people in the Commonwealth are workers, and their activity has a material end in view; there is a continuous state of tension resulting from keen competition, and the difficulties of acquiring position and honour; and as people are more taken up with the business of life itself, it would seem to explain the aesthetic of modern society, the cult of life, the hatred of criticism, the general impatience with everything, and the resulting ignorance and selfishness that follow.

Reading, wise reading would seem to be the panacea for mental ills; it provides food for the mind, variety for the thought, interest for life. With painting one needs love, reverence, obedience and perseverance; with music, practice and expression; the pursuit of science demands careful observation, concentration, patience, experiment and generalisation from facts secured, but with reading discrimination is required, intellectual alertness is necessary, self-development is the goal. Reading makes acquaintance with all the great men of culture and learning possible; no subject of interest, no field of knowledge no sphere of mental activity, is withheld from the one who reads. All the history of the past, all the thought of the ancients, the speculations of the philosophers, the political

reactions of nations, the advance of science, the movements of people, the conflicts, discoveries, the literature of the people of every country are available to the man, who reads, whose interest in life is for knowledge, and whose social temper makes life something more than mere self-enjoyment and a medium for pleasure.

Too large a portion of the world's available genius is absorbed by science, but genius, too, achieves substantial solidity from reading, while to read well, wisely, and deeply, requires as much skill and concentration as science demands. Much of the best literature of the world takes the actual form of spoken language—in fact, the written language has its spring and its reservoir in the spoken language. To speak well means that the speaker must be informed, and information is gained from reading. A close and penetrating study of literature provides a man with an abundance of material for conversation. Reading facilitates the way for a democratic society to become an intellectual aristocracy; furthermore, it enables a better and a higher education to shine forth with a more brilliant lustre.

When teachers get their students interested in reading, they find an improvement in the compositions, a warmth and radiance in their common thought, a maturity in their outlook, and a greater likelihood to move on their own intellectual medium. Teachers do well to make their students interested in Australian literature, for during the past sixty years Australian writers have poured forth a fair spate of literature of social, political and economic value, but almost nothing relating to the philosophy of aesthetics or treatises dealing with the aesthetic in art and literature. In recent years historical studies and works possessing a philosophic aura have appeared, but in the Australian literary field more has been achieved in the poetic phase than in its prose, although novel writers have been numerous, and the quality of their work has been particularly praise-worthy.

Poetry with its charm "beginning (1) as a random voyage among the blue seas of fancy", seems also to have appealed to more people than its prose works. The Australian people feel that poetry achieves what is too great for prose; they love the inspiration and melody of the great singers of the eternal choir; they willingly associate themselves with those who sound the profounder depths and soar to the sublime heights of thought and implication.

"To experience (2) any of the deeper emotions of life, says Robert Lynd, whether in love, religion, patriotism or the

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(1) *An Anthology of Modern Verse.* (R. Lynd).

(2) *English Literature.* (J. I. Bryan). Page 282.

desire for a more perfect world is to be a guest of the king; and the language of the king, is in the finer sense of the word, poetry—its function is to make the life of man fuller and more real." Sir Henry Newbolt treats poetry as a transfiguration of life heightened by the home-sickness of the spirit for a perfect world. The reading of intelligent books makes intelligent readers. Readers do not make books, but books make readers. A book that arouses interest readily finds readers, and many Australian novels are now being widely read and intelligently assessed as to their real value. A novel like "Land Takers" by Brian Penton, is one of many that has captured the critical attention of a great many readers.

### APPRECIATION.

The future will surely see the teaching of appreciation in the schools—not only of music, and literature, but of art and of artistic values. In the early Australian schools, there was very little thought of the aesthetic; over-crowding and understaffing stood in the way. Schools were at first a business proposition, or a Church concern, but when the philosophy of public education was adopted, an opportunity was afforded to consider the aesthetic side of education. Those who attended the public schools sought for equipment for life, but in addition to skill in the equipment, the teachers inculcated such things as method, order, appreciation of the beautiful, and they aimed at implanting in their charges a taste for the fine arts, a love for literature, an idea of rhythm, a peep into the many spheres of man's spiritual activity. Some schools endeavoured to develop the aesthetic touch in their students by the erection of schools amid ideal surroundings, others by adorning the interiors of them with pictures, paintings, and statues, but educationists and teachers should remember that the aesthetic is active, not passive; pictures hanging silently on a wall may have no influence on taste whatsoever; ugly streets may depress one, gloomy and decayed sculptures cause uneasiness, a disreputable environment may annoy, yet people remain in poverty stricken surroundings; either circumstances retain them in such unfavourable localities, or their cultural aesthetic is of so low a standard, that they are not aware of their handicap.

Lessons in appreciation (1) are most valuable and in this respect the schools have a fruitful field ahead of them. In the teaching of appreciation the first impression is of great pedagogical importance—care and thought are needed to make the introduction to the lesson a good one, and the higher the materials rise above the common place, the greater is the teacher's care.

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(1) The Lesson in Appreciation. (H. F. Hayward).

Some lessons, whether in poetry, prose, art, music, etc., are epoch-making lessons, others become merely routine ones, but all lessons should be such as to make the student picture them all in prospect, and then later on dream of them in retrospect. Lessons in poetry, science, and history, afford opportunities for thrill and climax. To spoil a work of beauty by a hasty or a clumsy presentation, is an aesthetic crime of great magnitude. Unfavourable circumstances must be excluded to make an indelible impression with the first lesson. The explanation of the poems "Arethusa" (1) and "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (2), make excellent material for a picture building, for teaching appreciation, and for making students love poetry.

Professor De Garmo agrees with M. Cousinet (3) that a child's appreciation of art is predominantly a matter of intellect—realistic and dynamic; that impression must precede expression, that for real appreciation there must be a certain respect for the work of art, a desire to penetrate to its meaning—a contemplative state prolonged for some moments.

When lessons of appreciation are given, the discerning eye removes the scales from those not so skilfully schooled; what was once the spiritual possession of one, becomes the property of others; the love, reverence, obedience and perseverance exacted from an artist in his search for perfection becomes readily apparent to an audience under the master's direction, and the best results follow when the teacher insists that only by a continuous comparison of works of accredited artists, or authors, can an aesthetic maturity be acquired.

There are two parts or aspects of aesthetic (4) education—production or execution, and contemplation or appreciation, they cannot perform each other's function. The practice of an art may make one more or less clever in execution, but it does not make him a good judge of the work of others. The capacity to learn does not unfold itself, but requires to be developed by a teacher, a group, or some other stimulus of environment, and the same is true of music, literature, architecture, etc., the theory is one thing, the practice of it is another.

The faculty of appreciating beauty is latent in the generality of people, and it merely requires education, as is implied by the accepted expression—"an educated taste". When the education begins in the schools, it is easy to prolong it in adult life, or in the classes of adult education. The Australians are becoming an educated people; the leaders of thought are influencing all classes, and signs are not wanting that the aesthetic

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(1) Shelley.

(2) Keats.

(3) *L'Educateur Moderne*. (M. Cousinet).

(4) *L'Educateur Moderne*. (M. Cousinet).



contemplation of nature will soon attain the status of a cult. The (1) cost of education in Australia is high, but results will not be disappointing, if there is a display of intellectual power commensurate with the expenditure,, and if men of culture and wide reading are numerous and influential for betterment in the community.

Vernon Lee remarked that one of the most important conditions for aesthetic appreciation is novelty, but the skilful (2) teacher learns to distinguish between the child of slow artistic growth, the child who has reached a plateau, and the one of no aptitude at all, and he knows that aesthetic appreciation should be an important part of scholastic work. He who gets the same pleasure out of a book at 45, as at 25, has not developed on aesthetic lines; and he who fails at 60 to read in a book any more than he read when he was 20 or 30, has never enjoyed the refinement of the aesthetic impulse.

Furthermore, a young person who has not been introduced to works of art, nor to observe and enjoy their aesthetic character to the limit of his ability, has been deprived of an important part of his cultural heritage, and has been condemned to a life less rich than it might otherwise have been.

The intellectual people of the Australian Commonwealth must take their examples from the past, and guidance from the master minds of former decades for their tuition; the themes that their writers treat must be new, or they must make them new by an infiltration of thoughts belonging to their own time in their art, as in all others, of the ever advancing human mind. New prizes are always available for those who seek them; new interpretations of life and living call for articulation; fresh ideas tend to deal more with life in perpetual change and motion.

### THE UNIVERSITIES.

Leading educationalists are gravely perturbed as to the future of the Australian universities. In some respects it is said that they are free from worries that beset academic institutions in England and America. Sir John Medley after his tour abroad, said that he returned to Australia feeling prouder of his own university. The fact remains that present day universities are turning into vast technological institutions bedecked with a smattering of culture, which proportionately is on the decline. The Chairs in Medicine, Science, and other technical branches make headway but the Humanities and the Arts are neglected. Schools of Demography, Sociology, Oriental Languages and Foreign Relations, etc., have yet to be fully cared for and developed.

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(1) *The Nineteenth Century*, Jan. 1889. (E. W. Beckett).

(2) *New Bearings on Aesthetic and Art Criticism*. (Bernard C. Hoyl).

The universities are able to accomplish much in the fields of literature, philosophy, economics, history and cultural relations. The recent "School of Fine Arts" set up in the University of Melbourne will play a big part, not only in the development of artistic work, but also in cultivating and refining the public taste, and in furthering the growth of an educated public conscience in the matter of taste. Taste can be educated and even a relish may be acquired for what at first repelled, or left one cold. When the public taste is unrefined, decadence in literature and art is the result. The Chair of Fine Arts has already made an impression judging by the number of students who have enrolled, and the artistic enthusiasts who have attended the public lectures on art. The presence of "The Chair" is an indication to the schools to encourage art in their curriculum; to the academies that their contribution is furthered by a training in aesthetic apprehension; and that the cultivation of the Fine Arts is a reliable index of the culture of a country.

The unrefined (1) instinct of the multitude is, as a rule, in favour of what is obvious and superficial; loud colours, commonplace sentiment, transient impressions often characterise public opinion, but a tradition of authority, a cultured taste, a sense of the universal demands something higher, something better and more sublime.

In art (2) and literature the university is not the handmaid of the student but the nursing mother; her office is not to teach only, but to regulate and guide, sometimes encouraging that which is unduly depreciated, or restraining within limits that which is valued beyond its worth.

The university, today, is beginning to further Adult Education, and one factor in this section which has great prospects for betterment is Broadcasting.

A university though it cannot compass the cycle of knowledge is required to provide for its introduction; it should supply competent instructors, and it should train teachers to be more than qualified. What is lost sight of today is the actual quality of great teachers, and the methods they utilise to instruct their subordinates. "The plots and marshallings of affairs," says Bacon (3), "come best from those who are learned": this remark applies to planners and plans of education.

Good teachers place before the eyes of their students high living examples of erudition and ability, and they endeavour to

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(1) *Life in Poetry*. (W. J. Courthope).

(2) *Inaugural Lecture, School of Arts, Sydney, 1860*. (Dr. John Woolley).

(3) *Bacon's Essays*.

make them cultivate studious habits, and to appreciate the difficult activity of the spirit, as the recognition of the crown and flower of noble living.

A person is liberally educated in proportion as he is literate and articulate in the languages of human intercourse—verbal, symbolic, and expressive. Only one error, said Mr. Mansbridge, can truly destroy the life of scholarship, and that one is committed by men, who not only fear to embark on unknown seas, but who hold back because of the comforts and rest of the shore.

The graduate schools of Australia are tending to become more active in academic leadership. The graduands show minds that are critical, but not pedantic, men that are enthusiastic in the search for truth and are keen not only to conserve knowledge but to interpret it for the social good.

Erasmus said of Louvain "That no one graduated in Louvain without knowledge, manners and age"—In Australia more students are going to the university now than in former days, indicating a desire for knowledge, an appreciation of culture, and a wish to share in the mental atmosphere created by academic environment. Education is largely a ladder, the top-rung of which is the university, the sure highway leading to the fulness of life. A university is pledged in the first instance to the quest of scholarship; it is the guardian of the broad central culture of mankind; its task provides that stable foundation of mental and spiritual training on which alone specialisation is built, and it is the university's special privilege to uphold a country's aesthetic.

The question is often asked shall the Australian university field be reserved to Australians, or shall it be open to the Empire and to the world. If more reciprocity existed between the parts of the Empire, if a Federation of the Dominions were a reality, if a greater spirit of common interest existed between the Dominions and Great Britain, better results—political, social, economic, educational and aesthetic would follow. Oxford and Cambridge can provide for Australia what she needs, Scottish and Irish Universities can benefit Australia in many particulars, Great Britain needs the fresh vigorous and hopeful outlook from the Dominions. Education is a great Empire integrator and invigorator. The Australasian, or the Canadian, or the Sth. African background is not as rich or historic, or even as stimulating as the Englishman's, but the advance of each along the lines of science, technology and spiritual adventure gives them an advantage. Academic exchanges between England and Australia have been suggested from time to time, but as yet they have not materialised to any great extent. The writer would favour inter-dominion exchanges, believing that such exchanges would be responsible for better cultural

relations, wider inter-dominion appreciation, and even more satisfactory trade reciprocity between countries.

Finally, the university, helps to lay the foundation of the ideal State—one whose people aspire in their cities and communities to intellectual leadership; a state with men and women not indifferent to political and social problems, with people inspired by high ethical ideals, interested in philosophy, art, religion, politics, science, education—all necessary human activities, all a part of our civilisation. When social problems, politics, government, industry, etc., carry a philosophical outlook; when education endeavours to solve the problems of the young and the old; when the churches cultivate their own garden—the garden of religious life, which is their own peculiar field for the spirit; when moral values, eternal in their quality, transient in their form and application, are the foundation of a country's greatness, and when all people are taught to take pleasure in things that are fine, pure and strong and of good repute, then they are prepared for a life wholesome and happy in itself, and useful to the community. Such a life is one of culture, betterment and spiritual achievement. The culture of things cultivated is like the air, the possession of which robs no man, but benefits those who partake of it. When there is no diminution in the intercourse between the life of the university and that of the State, and when the inspiring example of individual scholars and great teachers at the university is observed and felt by all, then the university justifies for the community, the exalted position it is expected to hold.

The future finally will stress two things:—the development of good conversation, and the writing of books to make Australia better known abroad—both are aesthetic helps, both as aesthetic pleasures are valid functions of man's mind. Conversation with the Australians has not been regarded as an art, but its development should be encouraged, for it was the conversation ability of the French people that earned for them the appellation of being cultured. Conversation is an expression of the aesthetic, for cultured speech, accuracy in utterance, knowledge of grammar, proper intonation, facility of construction, correct subject matter, etc., are all important features in giving prestige to a country and in associating it commercially and aesthetically with other countries. The friction of life helps conversation and when people associate, and various interests obtrude; when people are interested in one another and in the ordinary things of life, and know when to speak and when to be silent, then good conversation has an opportunity to reach praiseworthy standards. A homely expression, according to Demosthenes, is sometimes much more telling than elegant diction—since it is drawn from life, and because it is familiar, it is all the more convincing. Conversation is successful when

it depends on one's reading. Literature and common interests supply ample material for conversation between parties of two or three or more, but it was the salons of France that provided the localities where people gathered and developed their conversational activity. The salon provided the opportunities for making the contacts with superior men and women—contacts that acted as a stimulant to the intellect.

A man's culture is more immediately manifest in his speech, and of all human accomplishments good speech takes the highest rank. Voice production is the first essential of good speech; it is the speaker's voice that attracts or repels as it moulds the vocal tones. An eminent (1) writer contends that good speech is the foundation stone of education, and to have inaudible or unintelligible speech inflicted from the pulpit, platform, stage, or even to endure it in ordinary conversation, is something socially and aesthetically wrong, while ability to speak, or the practice of public speaking, increases one's power to serve his fellow-men and his own endeavours to become a guide for others. If engineers were good speakers, they would become presidents of Corporations; good preachers would attract large congregations, and accomplished platform orators would sway by their influence, convince by their confidence, and create a standard of oratorical excellence for men of public character.

Saint Simon, speaking of Fenelon said: "His conversation was marked by that charm and good taste, which only comes from loving familiarity with the best society, and the habits of the great. He cast a spell on those who once came within the magic circle of his presence. He never used the unkindly word that only the alchemy of time could soothe, but he was always ready with a word of appraisal for the present or a gesture of encouragement for the future."

Broadcasting in recent years has stimulated a growing interest in speech, and as the microphone is an exceedingly sensitive instrument, robust vital speakers have a distinct advantage. However, as the presence of an audience acts often as a magnetic influence, and calls forth what is best in a speaker, it would appear that broadcasting while able to reach so many listeners, and to convey to them exactly the message meant, falls to achieve the optimum good. Often, too, one's voice does not suit the microphone, and even when it does, it tends to make it different from the natural voice.

### MAKING AUSTRALIA BETTER KNOWN.

In Australia's early history Mrs. Louisa Meredith and Miss Louisa Atkinson, writers and naturalists, helped to make Australia better known in other lands, and they brought before the Australian-born the beauty and interests of the natural objects

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(1) Speech Training for Children. (II. St John Rumsey).

and phenomena of their own land. Mrs. Meredith arrived in Australia in 1839, and made Tasmania her home for fifty years. Miss Atkinson was born in New South Wales in 1834. Both these ladies wrote poetry and prose; both specialised in botany, but Mrs. Meredith wrote mostly about the natural history of Tasmania.

There are many writers in Australia like these two pioneers who have endeavoured to make the Commonwealth better known but a gap remains—no one has, as yet, placed Australia before the eyes of the world with a literary production equal to what Kipling did for India, Conrad for Malaya, and Stevenson for the South Seas.

Shakespeare, Michael-Angelo and others, found their enduring glory, less through original discoveries and creations than through their power of gathering up all the works of their forebears and breathing into them the breath of life. Australian scholars of today are busy perusing the past history, the poetry and literary works of their predecessors, and the possibility of some great Australian production ceases to be remote. The life of an epoch makes an impression upon its architecture. It is equally true that the architecture of a people helps to form and model its character in the way of reacting upon it.

### CONCLUSION.

If there be beauty in the plans of the Australian cities and in the buildings which adorn the public squares and highways, its influence will make itself felt upon every passer-by. Beauty in buildings is an open book of involuntary education and refinement; it uplifts and ennobles human character; it is a song or a sermon without words, inculcating in a people a true sense of dignity, a feeling of reverence, a respect for tradition, and creates an atmosphere which breeds contentment. Every age tells its own story, in its own language to future generations.

The triumphal arches, the aqueducts, the basilicas of Rome reveal more of the great constructive genius of the Empire of the Caesars, than the contradictory annals of wars and political intrigues provided by writers, who wrote at great length of the history of the Roman Empire.

Today a growing interest is noticeable among natural scientists, critical scholars, educators, creative artists, etc., for the value of aesthetic experience. Modern emphasis on it is noted in the study of the humanities and world literature. Some writers have even advocated a return to the established authority of mediaeval-classical metaphysics, in the hope that an increasing conscientious concern for the unity which aesthetic values are providing in the teaching of Humanities and World Literature Courses might be the outcome.

It is the artist's legitimate duty to increase the public interest in art. Artists of each decade inspire the people with all the power of feeling of which an artist is capable; he depicts the intimate facts of life in all its phases, and of the environment peculiar to that life. English Art is noted for its intense nationality, and its loving descriptions of peculiarly English scenes and incidents in life and history. Australian Art, too, has its special features—its beauty, its light, its colour, its landscapes, etc., and the keen appreciation of its people for the best art. The fine attitude (1) towards art whether literary, plastic or architectural, as to everything else, is to be grateful always for the good and beautiful thing when it comes, without grudging and without doctrinaire complaint that it is not something else.

If poetry and philosophy, according to (2) E. K. Rand, played no small part in the building of Rome, may we not hope that Australian cities gleaming in the radiance of present prosperity, may be built up in the belief that spiritual goods alone are real; that the good life is always within one's reach; that a country shows wisdom in providing training for the public in discrimination, and the understanding of art as a part of the cultural heritage. When the aesthetic is not lost sight of in the home, when lessons of appreciation are given in the schools, when ample provision is made for the supply of wise literature to the public, when a love of national poetry exists in the community, then it is safe to foretell a happy future for the Commonwealth. According to Herder, "National poetry is the very flower of the soul, the greater evidence of its health and beauty. It binds people to the land by its condensed and gem-like history." It might be added, too, that the enjoyment of art, whether in literature, music, pure art, etc., is the most valuable way in which to elicit habits of aesthetic apprehension in the people.

The aesthetic in art, literature, music, architecture, etc., changes in outlook from time to time, for in art there is no eternity, even the works of the grand seigneurs (3) in music lack permanency, while poetry is the shortest lived among the arts, and the most restricted in its international influence, yet the Australian aesthetic will in the years to come figure pre-eminently in the aura popularis, and exercise a salutary influence over the cultural and intellectual world. With its roots deep in the soil of the past; with a tradition representing a spiritual treasure left to the world by centuries of the purest and greatest spirits that ever lived in Great Britain, with forms translated from the British Isles and developed in the shadow of

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(1) Outline of Literature. (John Drinkwater).

(2) The Building of Eternal Rome. (E. K. Rand).

(3) Greatness in Music. (A. Einstein).

the early Australian pioneers and scholars, with literary and artistic resources invigorated by contacts from others lands, guided and disciplined by capable critics and genuine teachers from European and other sources, the Australian aesthetic is now considered worthy of attention among authoritative institutions in all parts of the world.

The Australian critics at present are giving to their country lasting standards of taste as well as theories of literary criticism; their artists deal with the whole range of human emotions and treat the raw materials of life in a beautiful grandiose way; their literary and scholarly élite remain always on the alert to discover new spheres of interest, further associations of superior craftsmen to provide endless vistas of beauty, grace and service to their fellow-men; their musicians and vocal artists compare favourably with the best in artistic circles; their poets, writers, artists, etc., enjoy the happiness a creator alone knows, and participate in that golden harvest of beauty, that aestheticians claim as their own particular province, or they seek to solve the secret of the sway over the human heart that art exercises and music and poetry habitually holds, consequently it can with confidence be claimed that Australia's aesthetic is assured, that its progress along the intellectual high road is rich in promise, and that the words of the poet (1) ring true:

"She toils the withering heights the great ones know  
Upward and on, till the imagined glow  
Of fame is almost hers . . ."

The genius of the Australian cultural field, according to some authorities, is more scientific and literary than aesthetic, yet the power of its whole intellectus ipse, the social facts of its literature and art, the achievements of its scholars and its literary élite, with the alchemy of time and the widening interests of its people, provide hope that the Commonwealth will always be a land where the aesthetic ideal is possible, a country in which the aesthetic good is accepted, a people among whom the aesthetic will find ample opportunity for expression.

When a constellation of time and genius occurs together in its history, and a combination of youth and maturity brings the fruit of that constellation to life, we may hope that aesthetic appreciation among the Australian citizens will become a matter of ordinary routine, an exercise of daily discipline, an illumination of intellect, that an acquaintance with the things of the spirit gives and a study of philosophy confirms.

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(1) Furnley Maurice.



## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN.

### THE CONCLUSION.

#### INTRODUCTION.

The Development of Australian Aestheticism has been outlined in this work; the Philosophy underlying it has been noted; a criticism of the chief aesthetic phases—Literature and Art, has been supplied; a picture of the future has been presented; there remains little to add except to remark that what today represents the aesthetic side of life, may not be the ideal in another decade, or in another generation. The change in ideal is due partly to revolts, partly to man's natural desire for variations, or his inability to manoeuvre the tangled roads ahead, and to realise the discovery (1) of human life as a reality in its own right.

It is generally assumed that three types of revolt have cogency enough to engage the attention of the world—the economic, the moral and the aesthetic. The aesthetic revolt is a perennial visitor in human affairs, but the economic and the moral occur at different times and are frequently involved in momentous issues.

As this work is concerned mainly with the expression of the aesthetic and its shades of difference, the economic and the moral revolts, occurring in human society from time to time, need not be dealt with. (2) Whatever relates to the aesthetic, whether in philosophy, in poetry, in religion or in art, is the matter under consideration, for they are subjects so spiritually akin that the message of the one is difficult to separate from the message of the others—all have the same aim; all search deeply, and seek the great truths—the complete view of life. They all agree in what they seek, their methods of search differ. The philosopher interprets life in its Reason, the poet in his motive beholds it in its Beauty, the prophet sees it in its Goodness, while the artist associates it with Unity; each attends to its own special side—reason, beauty, goodness, activity.

The most remarkable phenomenon of the twentieth century is the standardisation of civilisation, due to improved facilities of intercourse between peoples and races. The world is not now directed by diverse systems of culture; the West does not despise the East—the spiritual treasures of both East and West are works of art and literature. The peoples of the East during the centuries gone by, created works of literature and

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(1) Concord and Liberty. (Jose Ortega Y Gasset).

(2) The Scope of Music. (P. C. Buck).

philosophy, some of which in subject matter and style, rank with the master-pieces of antiquity. To appreciate to their full value the works of art and literature, whether Eastern or Western, or both, requires in many cases the possession of a fine aesthetic.

When the aesthetic of a community is being analysed, it must be remembered that the aesthetic of one man differs from that of another, as much as the education of one may contrast with that of another person. The young person has his aesthetic, the man in the twenties, with his wider experience and better knowledge is not without refinement, while the mature person—the man of deeper spiritual training and discipline, shows a still further advance in the aesthetic scale. The school-book to some extent symbolises the aesthetic of the youth; the hand-book finds favour with the man beginning his twenties; the aesthetic code—the discriminating element, the catharsis of the cultural scholar, varying with age, time, circumstances, etc., represents the aesthetic of maturity, and it is mainly with the aesthetic of the matured, the scholarly individual, that this theme of study becomes a topic of interest.

The aesthetic (1) is not something static and immobile, it is dynamic; like culture, it needs exercise; it is not a gracious gift from heaven; it is the fruit of training, the outcome of direction and education. The aesthetic experience is not regarded as simply one of many human awards, but one of the most important means for perceiving and revealing human values of many kinds.

This chapter—the concluding one, deals with Ideals, the way of perfection, the charm of poetry, the interchange of ideas on art, and the *via aesthetica*—all necessary helps in the finer development of a people's imaginative culture, all contributions to one's intelligence, all incentives for obtaining that distilled wisdom that reveals human values and follows from an individual's appreciation of the aesthetic.

### IDEALS.

The poets and other imaginative writers of a country play important parts in framing ideals. Without ideals a country is simply a geographical expression or a trading post. With ideals the country is an entity, possessing a soul, capable of inspiring its people to aspire to something nobler than commercial success, something more animating than mere theorising, something more enduring than material gains. Ideals carry men into the celestial empyrean; they open to all a new and luminous world; they enable art, music, literature, the drama, the understanding of the past, the science and knowledge of the

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(1) *Essays in Criticism*. (PP. 5-6).

expert to become the possession and the heritage of the ordinary man.

Two ideals urge people forward to attain the ambition of life—the ideal of self-perfection and that of active service. Self-perfection requires a life-long apprenticeship, a severe course of discipline and self-denial, including years of careful direction and education. Active service, whether in the cause of others, or in the career of a profession, always presents to individuals worth-while goals.

(1) Different hypotheses are suggested for the origin of ideals, but Love is regarded by most writers as a definite root. "Love gives rise to the impulse to drive man on in fulfilment of the high destiny of his race, rescuing the human element in him from the gross, and keeping alive throughout the ages the consuming thirst for spiritual perfection, and the rare and profound emotion that dwells at the heart of his inward experience of religion, saintliness, and art. "Love," says Dante, "sanctifies (2) and transforms life, transforming it as though at the touch of a magician's wand, from something ordinary and even trivial to a calling noble, inspiring, sublime."

### THE ROAD TO PERFECTION.

The advance of Australia culturally, spiritually and aesthetically enables its citizens to attain to the higher levels of perfection. Although no absolute perfection is conceivable, unless we mean, as Hegel did, the final product of an endless process, the guiding principle for all is the striving after perfection everywhere, without regarding any perfection as ultimate. The more advanced a soul becomes, the more differentiated are its organs and formations, and the more does it incline to crystallisation. The mind of every one crystallises sooner or later into a rigid structure, which once it is completed, seems incapable of any change, and only grows and changes its substance, as the physical body does, and then comes the paradox: we regard as the greatest mind, not the one whose structure is the firmest, but conversely, the one who is most plastic; the one whose mind is never "static", but is always progressing.

Curiously enough, too, while an individual may always tend to progress towards perfection, still it is never possible to visualise a perfect human being, a perfect scholar or a perfect artist, etc. There is always something to add to make a person perfect; there is always a little extra to acquire to make one's scholarship final, or one's artistry faultless.

Three things, however, serve to guide the Australian along the aesthetic path to perfection—the reading of good literature, the study of poetry and the interchange of ideas dealing with

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(1) *A Critical History of Modern Aesthetic.* (Earl of Listowel).

(2) *Vita Nuova* (Dante).

art. The one who strives after perfection, who appreciates the aesthetic in literature, art, life, etc., touches the highest issues. Often the ideal calls for originality, a state that implies loneliness; the life-prison of greatness occasionally involves intense labour, the application of disciplinary methods, a period of social isolation, and a retreat from the world of affairs.

Good literature is not exactly bright and startling thoughts as found in the weekly or monthly magazine, but a mirror that reflects the depth and variety of human life as seen by an inspired mind. Literature, too, must be studied in its setting of contemporary life—nor should it be isolated long from the thoughts and conditions that created it. People are taught to appreciate literature, in the same way as art appraisalment is guided and elicited. Discussion of a poem or of a book invariably leads to appreciation of it; it determines the reason for the forms of genres, the vera causa why the work was produced, and the primary influences which helped in the production of a book, an essay, or a poem.

The study of fine literature and especially of the great poets affords permanent good and sustenance to our sense of duty; great literature gives readers the encouragement and comradeship of the great minds that are at their disposal. From noble examples and from the wealth of great books, the reader finds reliable guides and trustworthy models, serving as mentors to check or as sure stimuli to encourage him. The real hindrance to progress is mis-spent time—energy wasted on mean books, ephemeral topics, transitory interests, that merely amuse or distract one, but rarely provide him with the nutriment his spirit requires, or the help that furthers his educational advancement.

The quality of literature is the quality of humanity; it is the quality that communicates between man and men, the secret of the human hearts and the story of life. Books especially those that have been sifted as the best of all the centuries become for every one immortal friends. Every good book is brimful of the inspiration of a great soul, while the reading of a good book is an anodyne far better than many men have used for forgetting the unpleasantness and dullness of life: "The Study (1) of literature stimulates us in old age, is an ornament in prosperity, a comfort and a refuge in adversity, a joy at home, no hindrance abroad; it helps us through sleepless nights, it goes with us on our travels and is our companion in the country."

If people are consistent readers, books for them will always be incomparable instruments of uplift and liberation, for books are still the *patée royale*, i.e., the essential diet of the elect, the master-minds. The difference which marks off the

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(1) In Defence of the Poet Archias. (Cicero).

best literature in books from other expressions of thought in language is the element of art, which runs through all literary expression.

### THE CHARM OF POETRY.

Australians judging by the history of its literature have always loved poetry. A casual perusal of its anthologies reveal the wonderful number of its poets, the variety and extent of the subject-matter of their poems, the delicate shades of the poetical workmanship, which occasionally baffle the investigator. The atmosphere of the poem, the most important, intimate and elusive of its qualities, appears to be the thing that the Australian poets have attended to with care.

(1) "Poetry turns all things to loveliness; it exalts the beauty of that which is most beautiful; it adds beauty to that which is deformed; it marries exaltation and horror, grief and pleasure, eternity and change; it subdues to union under its light yoke, all irreconcilable things; it transmutes all that it touches and every form moving within the radiance of its presence is changed by wondrous sympathy to an incarnation of the spirit which it breathes."

Poetry (2) is an architectural art based not on evolution or the idea of progress, but on the articulation of the contemporary human consciousness *sub specie aeternitatis*, and inclusive of all readjustments incident to science and other shifting factors related to that consciousness. Poetry has a greater intimacy and a wider scope of implication than painting or any of the arts, consequently it is more apt to be indicative of impending changes in other media such as painting or music.

(3) "A poet, as he is the author to others of the highest wisdom, pleasure, virtue and glory, ought personally to be the happiest, the best, the wisest and the most illustrious of men. The greatest poets have been men of the most spotless virtue, of the most consummate prudence, and if we would look into the interior of their lives, the most fortunate of men."

A (4) poem, a play or a novel approaches a greater beauty and earns the suffrages of a larger body of men in so far as it expresses with a restrained poignancy the tears in things. A play all wit may amuse but not haunt, yet let a little sadness hang somewhere behind its humour, immediately it has its opportunity of troubling our memory and eliciting

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- (1) A Defence of Poetry. (P. B. Shelley)
  - (2) Revolt in the Arts. (Oliver M. Sayles).
  - (3) A Defence of Poetry. (P. B. Shelley).
  - (4) Through Literature to Life. (Ernest Raymond).

ing the coveted word—Beautiful. The real measure of a book's greatness is its power to haunt; it would seem that something of the world's pain should find a voice even in a book that is mainly laughter. The casual reader of Australian literature notes a slight touch of sadness in it, even though the forces that helped to shape the course of Australian life and literature were its sense of freedom and nature.

Strindberg held that people who have grown up in a happy childhood seldom become great, for they always have pleasant memories to look back upon, which means that they forget to look forward. Life passed in tranquillity and honour, causes none of that anguish of mind or stress of soul, from which the grandeur of great poetry for example, or the passion of noble prose arises. The results are always better when the lips of the poet are touched with divine fire and the soul is seared with its flame.

Poetry (1), says S. J. Brown, helps one to see in nature and human life, the beauty that the poet has found there, and so to win for himself the poet's way of looking at things. "Poetry helps to keep fresh within us what tends to wither and fade, our sense of the mystery of the world, our realisation of the deep significance of things. It is thus a perennial source of refreshment to the spiritual within us. Its business is with the ideal—it is detached, unpractical, it has high ideals and universal sympathies." Poetry, according to another, is a perpetual astonished discovery of beauty in nature, man, and God. The poet partially succeeds in communicating to people his vision, "that he is not only a seer, but a revealer, a prophet of the wonder and beauty of the world."

English poets have sung of the glories of England; Australian poets, too, have not been unmindful of the beauties and charm of their own native land. Poets are at their best when mourning lost glories, or stirring up the memories of past heroic deeds, or goading the oppressed to fresh efforts for freedom. Such themes have not been necessary as yet in Australia. If a great war, or a sad calamity, had happened in Australia, it would have given rise to renowned warriors, to great military leaders and to eminent statesmen; it would have called forth the poet, and he would have done for Australia what Scottish and Irish poets in the past did to rouse the patriotism of their people. Man needs alien elements, which he may over-value, not to get weary of his own peculiarity, to maintain it alive, and to prevent it from becoming rigid. A great event in Australia will call forth the great poet, the hero never arrives until the occasion calls him.

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(1) Studies in Life. (S. J. Brown).

The Australian poetic novice during the period of his novitiate experiences the truth of what a writer said:—"Poetry (1) had given him the habit of wishing to discover the good and beautiful in all that met and surrounded him, that its end was the elevation of the soul to bring it more into conformity with great primal harmonies, loving all that is best, beautiful, good and true, all that is pure and great. Art has for its spirit nothing but love and admiration. To see the soul—is the culminating glory of the artist as he seeks to achieve the expression of his experience."

(1) Mr. Bernard O'Dowd maintained that Australia possessed in several individuals the component parts of a great poet, but so far they had never crystallised in one personality. "The glamour and mystery of the Australian natural scene should one day awaken great poetry, a great national poet will arise when our own ideal of nationhood is a little clearer."

Australians have their Shakespeare Societies, their Browning Clubs, their Kipling Circles, their Dickens' Fellowship, and although the members of these Societies may be ardent advocates for the poetry of Shelley, Wordsworth, Scott, Byron, Keats, Francis Thompson and Alice Meynell, etc., still there is something that Adam Lindsay Gordon, Henry Kendall, Marcus Clarke, Victor Daley, Bernard O'Dowd, Mary Gilmore, T. I. Moore and others can say to them, which others are unfamiliar with, or are unable to convey with fruitful results. As Australian Literature gathers strength, as it develops in amount and importance, the writers growing up and forming a school are interpreting the basic human passions—the real stuff of prose literature, through Australian symbols; they help to develop the national life and character; they endeavour to call forth the critical faculty; they make a definite foundation for the Australian literary aesthetic.

### INTERCHANGE OF IDEAS ON ART.

The art of a country is improved when an interchange of ideas takes place, when the artists of one country visit another country to observe what has been done in its artistic line, or when an interchange of teachers takes place between countries separated by many miles and by different types of climate. The exchange of works of art between countries has always been fertile in happy results. In addition to the social and political values arising from such transfers students are able to learn directly what other students have accomplished, how the trend of thought varies in different countries, how far from perfection their own country is, or how in some respects they outclass the work of foreign artists. The exchange of

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(1) An Address to the Australian Literature Society, 1942. (B. O'Dowd).

pictures has not been as frequent as might be desired, but now with the peace that follows the Great War, more in the future might be accomplished.

### VIA AESTHETICA.

When Australia publishes more literary journals, more literary and artistic reviews of scope, standing and influence, it will tend to better the aesthetic of its people. It has been already indicated that the aesthetic requires growth, time, training and even leisure. Like education more than anything else, it requires the application of that "law (1) of abstinence—that patient waiting for the fruit of our labours, which nothing but a well-grounded reliance upon the ultimate result could support or justify."

A native (2) idiom and a country's culture, moreover, render necessary a people "who have lived long in the land, who have moulded that land, and who have been moulded by it; who think in its terms, and who bend their artistic inheritance to its requirements". The democratic land of Australia has now awakened to its national consciousness, it has no need to rely upon foreign writers for the best appreciation of its beauties, its glories, or its potentialities. Australians now figure in the self-discovery and appraisal of their own land; their idealism comprehends their social vision, their educational and cultural outlook, their literary trend, their aesthetic aim.

A. T. Strong in his work (3) published in 1913, mentioned that an English Professor writing to an Australian friend declared that he considered Australia to be the most literary of all the British Dominions.

In a community with the wider development of poetry, art, religion, philosophy, etc., the aesthetic plays a more important part. As art is itself a revelation of the Unseen, of the Infinite Spirit, and as Beauty is a perpetual benediction, an exhaustless feast for the "seeing eye", the "hearing ear" and the "delicate touch", the aesthetic which determines what is beautiful, what is worthy of observation, or of similarity to "the Music of the Spheres", notes the inner love and harmony. The poet's pen writes the line, the painter's brush fixes the shape, the architect's eye sees the form, but it is the work of the aesthetic to make the final decision, as to what is real excellence, the essential, *la fine fleur de beauté*.

Georges Duhamel remarked that nothing strikes the traveller more in South America, than the sight of a people intoxicated

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(1) Lecture delivered (Dec. 18th, 1860), Sydney. (J. Woolley).

(2) A Short History of Canadian Art. (G. McInnes).

(3) Sonnets and Songs. (A. T. Strong).



with a love for a culture, which they seek with all their strength. Everywhere one sees libraries provided, the schools and the institutions are magnificent structures,, the poets, novelists, painters, all spring from the soul of the American Society.

France owes much of her moral prestige to what one termed her intellectual exports—works of art, plays, works of science, literature, philosophy, etc. Australia in the realm of music, literature, and art, has already made an impression on the world of culture and scholarship abroad, but what it has already done, will be nothing to what it will accomplish in the years to come.

Australian idealism presents also a practical issue as well as a theoretical one. Town-planning and preservation of beauty spots receive attention. Its cities are now planned more and more from the view-point of aesthetic interests; the ugly is being gradually eliminated from the market-place and the home; tastes have become more refined and cultivated; occasionally signs of an aesthetic rebellion, are seen, for an aesthetic unrest is often just as common, as a social or as an economic one.

(1) It has been said that no pure democracy has ever developed a great literature or evolved an outstanding art. The arts it is held, are encouraged and fostered by an aristocracy endowed with leisure, taste, and wealth. Australia has had no aristocracy; most of its citizens are economically comfortable rather than wealthy; the great majority of the people are workers, rather than friends of leisure; few magazines or reviews of a purely literary and artistic character figure in its cultural category, yet Australians are keen on art education; they are all lovers of music; they are partial to aesthetic experiences, and they are keen to participate in those aesthetic joys that make life fuller and richer. There appears no reason why democratic Australia should not develop a great literature, or become famous in art. Already much has been accomplished, and many indications point to a further and more vigorous development. Australian literature and art grew up hindered by the shadow of England's mighty, ever-spreading, but scholarly literature, preventing the sun from illuminating it; bias and prejudice had to be opposed; the national life and character at first found difficulties in being developed; the critical faculty had little opportunity for being called forth, and even the school and university books gave Australian literature the minimum of encouragement.

Australia during the past one hundred years produced great leaders in the educational, cultural and aesthetic spheres—men and women whose works breathed their subtle fragrance into every hearth, and whose aesthetic contributions to literature, art, and philosophy, represented an epoch of glory, an era of artistic

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(1) In Defence of Letters. (Georges Duhamel).

and even political splendour for their great country. In addition to the above, statesmen like W. C. Wentworth, geologists like W. B. Clarke, anthropologists like F. J. Gillen and Professors Baldwin Spencer and Elkin, explorers like Sturt and Forrest, research men like Farrar, entomologists, scientists, churchmen, medical men, etc., have all added lustre to their native land; all of them enriched society with their discoveries, the books they wrote to further knowledge, the efforts they made to educate their fellow-citizens, and to leave them a legacy of what is finest in old education and a foundation to make use of what is best in the new, paved the way for the Australians to achieve lustre in their education, precision in their philosophy, a glimpse of the subtle process called the History of Ideas, and that purity of life consistent with the aesthetic ideal. All of them sought to open up for others the great treasures of human thought and experience.

The children of Australia have grown up in happy circumstances and pleasant surroundings. They may not have the impetus and dynamic energy that characterised their ancestors when they first settled in Australia, but they are resourceful, enterprising, enthusiastic; they are able to make the most of circumstances; they are interested in the cultural things of life; art, literature, music, social qualifications, and the higher qualities of the spirit make a decided appeal to them. Nor do they place more importance on the accidental qualities of things, than on the essential aesthetic ones; they display a willingness to compete with world standards in every phase of endeavour.

Greece was once the home of ancient philosophy. The Australian climate is not unlike the Grecian, and as in some respects the Australian is like the Greek, it is possible that Australia may yet be the home for the philosophy of the moderns—a philosophy characterised by its real practical value. Great writers and statesmen had their home in Greece, and revolutionised the world with their books, their ideas, and their thoughts. Australian writers, too, have lighted their themes with an electric radiance, transmuting and transfiguring whatever they touch, indicating that Australia will soon be recognised as a genuine contributor to the literature, music and art of the world.

(1) The T'Ang dynasty (618-906 A.D.) was regarded by the Chinese, and by foreigners too, as the Golden Age of their art and culture—a period famous for its painting, sculpture, pottery, bronze and other crafts; it was also a period of extraordinary virility, grandeur of conception, and extraordinary success in the incorporation of "motifs" from abroad.

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(1) Introduction to Chinese Art and History. (Arnold Silcock).

(1) Japanese art enters into the daily life of the people, whether educated or ignorant, trained or untrained. Things in the home are designed under the guidance of aesthetic taste, while the artistic enjoyment which each finds an essential part of life is due to his response to nature's suggestion and inspiration. Japanese architecture favours the wooden structure, because the Japanese being profound adorers of the world of nature cannot help giving utterance to their adoration, even in their homes and buildings.

French writers look to the age of Louis XIV as their aesthetic ideal; the English, pay homage to the Victorian era; the Canadian regard the time of Joseph Howe, circa 1850, or even the time of the later poets—Cremazie, Lampman, Carmain, D. C. Scott and Isabella Crawford as their outstanding period of literary production. The Australians, who cannot boast of Grecian antiquity, or of the golden age of the Chinese or of the Japanese artistic enjoyment or the *éclat* of "Le grand Siècle", turn their attention to the forward movement inaugurated during the Bulletin epoch, or to the artistic period dating from 1920, or perhaps to the year 1938, so rich in the production of the novel, or may be that period in the future when their writers will illuminate in a more impressive way the significant facts of human life, and set them in clear view before their readers. The ideal of arts like all ideals is unattainable; it always remains ahead of any actual achievement. The Australian scholar willingly embarks on any enterprise that is consistent with his aesthetic ideal; he includes quality in the selection of his literature, discernment in his appreciation, understanding and knowledge of art and its collections dans l'école des Beaux Arts. If he is a truly spiritual man—a mystic, he longs for unity, and contemplates the joy that follows its acquisition; if he is an ordinary citizen—the Australian common man—he displays his aesthetic in his dress, his home, his garden, his social connections, reading, tastes, music, games, recreations, his associations and the type of hobby that absorbs his attention. In each case if the ideal is not attained, the work involved and the labour undergone in the quest give life an interest and a direction, and help to develop the individual's personality. The aesthetic pursuit secures the refinement that culture gives; it enables leisure hours and working periods to be spent in general converse with the great writers of all time; it makes its apprentices participators in the joy associated with the aesthetic experience.

(2) Soren Kierkegaard, the pioneer and apostle of modern romantic individualism, and Denmark's greatest thinker, insisted that personality was the one thing that mattered in life, and

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- (1) Art Life and Nature in Japan. (M. Anesaki).  
(2) Essays on Literature (J G. Robertson).

that each one should cultivate that inwardness of soul which takes no account of the world outside him.

On June 13th, 1861, Mrs. Macquarie's chair was designated the true foundation stone of the Sydney Botanical Gardens. On Jan. 1st, 1820, Fraser was appointed the Colonial botanist. The Sydney Gardens and Domain have always been bound up with the life and welfare of the people—the gardens with their opportunities for agriculture, horticulture and aesthetic education; the Domain with certain aspects of social life, open-air games, patriotic movements, and the development of the political instinct in its citizens.

To H. B. Bradley, and his father before him the people of Sydney are deeply indebted for the horticultural opportunities they made available; the people of Melbourne owe a debt of gratitude to Baron Von Mueller for what he accomplished for them. The Baron maintained that all gardens should minister to the aesthetic taste rather than to the utilitarian; attractive landscape, gardening, ornamentation and pleasing effects should be the aim rather than economic planting, scientific arrangements and experimental grouping, etc.

The Flower Shows held occasionally in the Botanical Gardens, or the exhibitions of floral specimens in the Town Halls of chief cities or in the marquees erected for the purpose, where the choicest specimens from the best private gardens and nurseries displayed, give some impression of the aesthetic aura that characterises the citizens of those cities.

Australia has always appreciated the advantages of high standards and difficult goals of attainment; it has demanded the highest credentials from its scholars, the purest motives and disinterestedness from its leaders and statesmen, the finest accomplishments from its citizens; it has always acknowledged the value of a great work done, or the nobility of an achievement accomplished. The schools, academies, and universities, have insisted on excellence as an ideal, accepting no problem as too difficult for solution, no theory beyond the possibility of investigation.

From the inscription on William Redfern's (1) medical diploma, the first ever issued in Australia, Sept. 1st, 1808—and signed by three surgeons, down to the present day, when efficiency, scholarship and idealism are required by the university before one's degree is granted, or before one is allowed to practise his profession, the Australian Commonwealth insists that its professional men and women shall be scholars of

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(1) Doctor, Magistrate, Grazier, Vigneror, Philanthropist, (1775-1833). (A.H.R.).

integrity, people of personality and zealous labourers in the field of social service.

Richelieu founded the French Academy—an institution to uphold the standard of taste and the delicacy of French thought; Henry Birkhead established the Chair of Poetry in Oxford about the year 1690, to purify the English national taste and to convey to students a sense of what is ideally noble and beautiful in Life and Letters. Australia has no literary academy to serve as a guide; it possesses no Chairs of Poetry yet, in her universities to give distinction to her literary themes, but she has one thing on which she may rely and expect good results from—the growth (1) of an educated public conscience in matters of taste, to exercise a general influence on the judgments of individuals. With its art education less widely developed than could be desired, the Australian aesthetic philosophy as it exists today is a matter for congratulation.

The Levant was once the centre of the world; it was also the centre of the two greatest movements in the Middle Ages—Islam and the Crusades. At a later date the Levant sank out of history. The Eastern Mediterranean, once the central sea of the world, the historic stage, par excellence, became a deserted back-wash, and Europe advanced to world dominion. Up to the twentieth century Europe with its politics, its social élite, its intellectual and moral leaders figured prominently in world history, but the twentieth century witnessed the entrance of America and Australia to the forefront of world-politics and economics. The United States of America had the advantage by reason of numerical strength, economic supremacy and more matured development, but Australia is gradually forging her way to rank high in world counsels.

Australia is a country, whose people are progressive idealists, democracy is its method of government, freedom is its privilege, the pursuit of art, science, literature, etc., is the ideal for its Lettered majority. The better, nobler and fuller type of life is intended for all its citizens; its democratic aim is not only education for every individual, but the possession of the highest culture, and the enjoyment of such an aesthetic philosophy as will make him the happiest citizen of a great Commonwealth.

The Australian knows that an aesthetic does not exist to further moral and humanitarian aims, but to enlarge (2) and purify the life of each individual; to believe with Croce that art is inseparable from the general life of the many, and that

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(1) Life in Poetry. (W. J. Courthope).

(2) Studies in Recent Aesthetic. (Katherine Gilbert).

aesthetic doctrines are not a special function for a privileged few, nor aesthetic articulation a favour for the rich or the aristocratic élite. He knows, furthermore, that as aesthetic education grows, judgment and feeling become complex, since more elements are brought within the category of the Beautiful. Oscar Wilde recognised the Arts as the great civilising influence in the world and an aesthetic education, by humanising people, as far more important for politics than an economic one.

Australia adopts a way of life of its own, a spiritual evolution—a tradition of pioneering and radicalism sufficiently marked to constitute a national philosophy. While it is true that an old and established civilisation is riper in cultural development than a young pioneering country, yet Australia enjoyed advantages withheld from other nations; she became conscious that she was a nation at an early stage, and nationalism forms the bridge over which communities religious and social, formerly strictly segregated, meet for collaboration in political and social life. The differences and disagreements may not be wholly eliminated, yet they are overborne in the unity of the national idea.

Sir Henry Parkes (1) wrote that in the life of nations there are periods when processes are silently at work, which the mass of living men never see and which are only detected by the clearest-sighted and the most philosophic observers. Such processes of thought proceed from one stage to another, until eventually they culminate in clear doctrines which are embodied in strong national action. Many movements in Australia have operated silently but effectively in the past; fresh movements are still taking place; some have a beneficial effect on the people; a few merely mark time; odd ones perhaps have not produced a salutary result, but many of them, either commercial, social, or aesthetic, have united Australia to the rest of the world.

In art and science, in poetry and prose, in philosophy and aesthetics, the more there are engaged in the practice, the greater and better is the result; and the greater the possibility that some one will attain to perfection in one or more of the subjects under consideration. Aesthetics and aesthetic appreciation are part and parcel of the economic and social thought of a community, and with its practical application to the daily life of all, there is a distinct hope that Australian poets, artists, writers, musicians, architects, sculptors, etc., interpreting their own age with its idiosyncrasies and peculiarities, its variations and its changing phases down the decades of Australian history, will always provide their people with the elixir of immortality, which is universal human truth, and encourage in them the appreciation of the Beautiful both in Nature, Life and Art.

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(1) The Australian Critic. (Oct. 1890).

Religion, ethics, science and aesthetics, are among the great treasures of the human mind, and in different epochs each one of them figured as the main centre of interest. The seventeenth century favoured ethics and religion; the eighteenth century, reason; the nineteenth century, science; it is fairly safe to predict that aesthetics will be the dominant feature of the latter part of the twentieth century, especially in Australia, where religion, high character, culture and aesthetic appreciation enhance and create the values that endure. Sir Henry Newbolt was unable to understand how a great nation could subsist spiritually on its present any more than it could materially subsist on its past. Decadence began the moment it ceased to draw nourishment from its own history. Australian history in recent years has received more attention than formerly, and even its historical novel has found considerable support from readers and now bids to hold its place as a prevailing influence in the Eastern Pacific—an influence of political and economic significance without doubt, but also one that will be felt particularly in the realm of the spirit. A nation requires to be somewhat ripe in years, before it develops an appreciation for culture and refinement, and economically sound before it cultivates art and finds a meaning for aesthetics. France, Italy, Spain and England out of their great resources and at various periods developed almost to their limits the love and practice of art; United States began its artistic life after the celebration of its centenary; Australia (1) entered the aesthetic world in a formal manner about 1880 when she began to put forth the power of that genius, which some of her writers and artists possessed in so full a measure, of weaving round the events of her short history reflections, stories and pictures which made and still make a deep and touching impact on the world, as lessons for the life of men.

The mind is greater and more wonderful than St. Peter's in Rome, St. Paul's in England, Raphael's painting in the Dresden Gallery, the Cathedrals and Public Buildings in Australia, for it brought those creations into the world. Art witnesses one fact more than another, that the mind is lord and master; the stamp of reason gives art its specific nature. Australia has its dominant aesthetic; that aesthetic has a philosophy of its own but the mind is above it all, and the Australian mind has been very fertile in many fields of endeavour.

The theology (2) of the priest combined with the love, the skill, the interest, the imagination of the lay man enable the church to give glory to God in the highest form; the culture of the public enables the state to produce results that benefit

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(1) Fifty Years in the Making of Australian History.

(2) The Consecration of Genius. (R. Sencourt).

the Commonwealth. Society is served best when its people are educated and trained in taste, so as to appreciate the value of the aesthetic; the individual, be he a practical man, a savant, or a mystic, when his manner is cultured, his mind illuminated by the light of imaginative literature, his soul possessed of a personality of wide appeal, works to the best advantage for the good of his fellow-men. When a man endowed with a heart throbbing with zeal and love for his people, feels happy when he sees them enjoying the visual arts, or training in the technique of the plastic ones, and particularly in that study which learns the secret of human hearts, the wisdom of human life, and the power of the human mind, he surely is the one who knows the aesthetic, to which the trained and refined mind aspires.

Philosophy is interested in ultimate principles; in reality as opposed to appearances, in the necessary pre-supposition of the rational, moral, and aesthetic life; but there never can be a final philosophy any more than there can be a final musical symphony, or a final lyrical poem. Many philosophers with their olympian aloofness give the impression of having no sympathy with human life and thought, but philosophy must touch human experiences and the facts of life at every turn. The main business of philosophy is to guide, and be the guardian of the general reason, i.e. the reasonable life as it is lived by man. Philosophy, too, liberates the mind from prejudice and ignorance, and thus prepares it to receive illumination from whatever sources are available. In this respect the Australian has the advantage, for his education has been broad, his attitude tolerant, his spirit free, his manner appreciative, his politics liberal to a degree, while his aesthetic finds its highest ideal in beautifying the useful, and his philosophy (1) of the beautiful will incorporate among its findings all possible relations.

Men like Sir Joseph Banks and Governor Phillip entertained high hopes for the future of Australia in the days when it was in the shadow; today, out of the shadows of night the Austral world rolls into light; it flourishes rich in promise for the rest of the world as a political and social laboratory. Australia is also a home for economic security, an abode for political freedom, an academy for the study of educational and scientific research. It is a land, too, where it is possible to live a graceful life, to enjoy the refinements of culture and philosophy, and by means of its aesthetic to appreciate to the full all the beauty that life provides in the imparting to the pathway of perfection a hypnotic fragrance and charm. The aesthetic appeal recognises that all seekers (1) for truth, all lovers of art, all silent

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(1) God the Beautiful. (E. P. Berg).



research students, all those on nature-study bent, the field naturalists, etc., are brothers—*fratres in arte*, all interested in exploring fields of knowledge, all workers for the common good: The aesthetic appeal is also a potent link in binding people together, for in addition to its intellectual phenomenon, it has also a social aspect. (1) When people meet together in the noble pursuit of spiritual culture, or when they compare notes as they advance along the *via aethetica*, they become friends in the true sense.

If the embers of school friendship never grow cold, even though the flame at times appears to die down, with greater emphasis can it be said that the friendships formed, and the associations made, by those lured to the love of beauty and the call of truth hold firmly through life. "Do you know," asks Emerson, "the secret of the true scholar? In every man there is something wherein I may learn of him; and in that I am his pupil." The desire to learn from one another makes the scholar sociable, the teachers the best students, and the scientists and saints the humblest of men.

When Lord Rosebery visited Australia in 1883 he was impressed with its beauty and grandeur. He referred to Port Jackson and its approach as "A matchless natural harbour, whose granite gates yield a reluctant entrance to a paradise of waters". All the approaches to Australia are not too inviting, nor its entrances too encouraging, but once an individual resides within its shores and becomes a dweller on its soil, its charm grows irresistibly. The Australian climate is beautiful, the sunshine is perennial, the inhabitants are happy, prosperous and interested in many things.

The new arrival soon realises that culture is in evidence among the citizens—both rural and urban, and that the aesthetic of the people is of a very high standard. The aesthetic impulse of the Australians created their beautiful cities in the Commonwealth; it erected the magnificent buildings seen, it sponsored the ornate homes and gardens observed everywhere; it provided the many sights of beauty for the enjoyment of its people.

The Australian aesthetic was responsible for placing many friends on the platform of love for our common humanity; for building for one and the many an ideal world of beauty; and for insisting that beauty in art, architecture, music, social relations, and above all in literature, is something that is intelligible; that the love of art is a natural process; that the artistry must have character if it is to possess permanent value, and that its influence must persist beyond the first moment of surprise and shock, and finally that it is necessary to observe in art as in life, the canons of Christianity.

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(1) Art and Common Sense. (S. C. K. Smith).

Complete aesthetic absorption is extremely rare, even though the field of aesthetics is large, and perhaps with the advance of science and the betterment of education the field will still become larger, and interest in poetic craftsmanship and that "finer spirit of all knowledge" will greatly increase. To move on one's own in the intellectual medium may not be the outcome of the aesthetic; the sincere pursuit of the aesthetic heaven might demand a concentration and an isolation impossible for most men, yet an association with the aesthetic helps towards the building up of a better world, or it brings into sensible channels the daily experiences of life, from which symbolism and mysticism and some form of aestheticism tend to make it wander. The aesthetic enables its disciples to admire the sweetness and grandeur about the faultless lines of poetry; the majesty, stateliness and utility noticeable in prose; the exaltation and beauty in art, the skill displayed in architecture, the inspiration in music, and an individual trend towards perfection in life.

The portrait of man is never finished; the poet will always probe subtly into the human heart; his ear will be alert for echoes of his ideal; the artist, will endeavour to add new features and fresh touches to his model, to embellish the magic wand of his genius and skill. The break (1) with classic education meant for teachers of literature and students of the humanities, a departure from the long tradition of philosophical criticism and philosophical aesthetics. From the fields of world literature and the humanities, from modern psychology, anthropology and even science, ideas about aesthetics have come and aesthetic experience is revealed in those fields.

Between (1) 1935 and 1942, ten major figures in American education spoke explicitly for the aesthetic experience as an approach to the larger "human values to the humanities" and their evidence showed that modern emphasis is placed on aesthetic experience in the study of the humanities and world literature. Poetic (2) experience according to Henri Bremond is a gift of God. An aesthetic experience, too, is a gift—an aesthetic experience in literature or in art, two repositories of human values—particularly salutary for preparing (3) the soul of man for fairer flowers and fruits in another age. Beauty, truth and goodness are not obsolete: they spring eternal in the heart: the philosophy of aesthetics provides the allurements of the call ad superiora.

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(1) Aesthetic Experience and the Humanities. (F. Shoemaker).

(2) Poetry and Prayer. (Henri Bremond).

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